new masses

HOW YOU CAN BEAT DEWEY
by S. W. Gerson

COALITION IS THE ANSWER
by A. B. Magil

November 5, 1946
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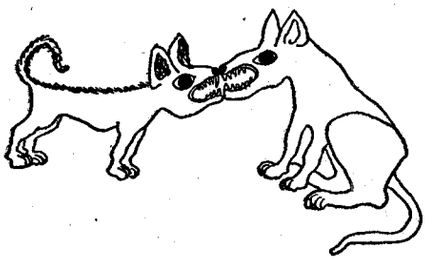
just a minute

IF YOU added up all the sixty-four-dollar questions in the minds of America's people these days the sum would be truly astronomical, or almost as much as current corporation profits. Even the Quiz Kids are stumped by the big questions of the day. What is going on? Why? And what does it all add up to?

That is why we believe that our NM series of ten forums (details on page 29) is really important. The subjects to be covered include, we are sure, the most vital topics of our times—labor, intellectuals, politics, religion, literature, economics, the Negro people, foreign policy, art and science. The speakers who will lead these discussions are expert in their fields, not in the academic sense of "authorities," but men who are working and leading in the mainstream of these areas of American life. And, of course, audience participation will be an important feature of the series.

So starting Monday night, November 11, the floor is open for questions and discussion. We recognize the lady on our left, the one with the unusual hat. . . .

FORREST WILSON, our seaman artist friend, came in the other day with a bulging portfolio — work which he had done at sea and in France since we saw him last. We spotted this canine controversy and asked him what it was all about. Well, just a couple of dogs who went along for the ride. But they didn't understand each other. Naturally. The big one is "Cheri," who speaks only French, and the little one, "Dogface," is from Brooklyn. Which shows the problems involved in developing a United Nations spirit between the land of the Seine and the Banks of the Gowanus. Said Forrest, "They were OK when they wagged their tails at you, but weren't so welcome when they did their business in the fo'c'sl." Anyway Brother Wilson is getting together a selection of his work for reproduction in a forthcoming issue.



THE Newspaper Guild of New York reports progress in its fund-raising drive to purchase a headquarters building. Bonds in the amount of $100 are being sold throughout the union for this purpose. None of us in the NM unit could raise this much dough individually, so we put our collectivist spirit to work on the task. A cocktail party was held a couple of Sundays ago at Gert Chase's house which netted enough to buy a bond. *E pluribus unum.*

FROM time to time a reader is sure to pipe up with the question, "What about jazz?" Well, we're not a square from Delaware—we like barrelhouse and the eight-to-the-bar stuff, too. And high up on our list of help-wanted articles was one on *le jazz hot,* as they say in fancier circles. Hence, we are happy and proud to present S. Finkelstein's article in this issue. You have seen his book reviews and music criticism in our pages many times in the past—work of excellent caliber. We think he rings the bell (or beats the skins) in this piece on jazz. What do you think?

LOUIS BURNHAM, newly elected executive secretary of the Southern Negro Youth Congress which Howard Fast writes about in this issue, is preparing a special article on the youth movement in the South which will appear soon in NM.

OUR next issue will celebrate the twenty-ninth birthday of the Land of Socialism. Among the features will be an article by Maxim Gorky, printed for the first time in America, on "How I Became a Writer." Sergei Kournakoff has written a special piece for us telling what he has seen in his homeland on his return after a twenty-year absence.

L.L.B.

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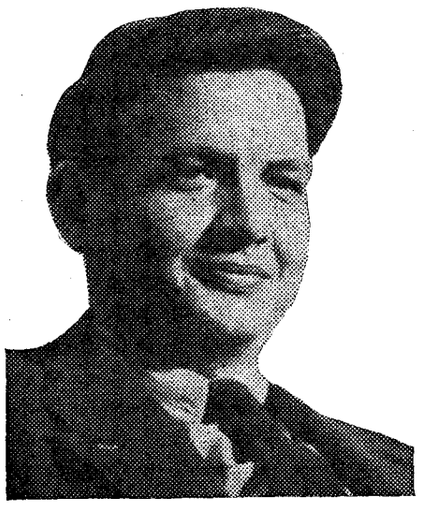
DEFEAT REACTION NOVEMBER 5th!

A message to New York voters from Robert Thompson and Benjamin J. Davis, Jr.

DEFEAT of American reaction is the main problem before the American people, and in the first instance, American labor. Reaction, which most citizens know by the name of big business, is trying to do two things: drive down the living standards of the American people and make the world safe for the American dollar. In the name of the Great God Profit, big business plans war against the American people at home and war against the peoples of the world.



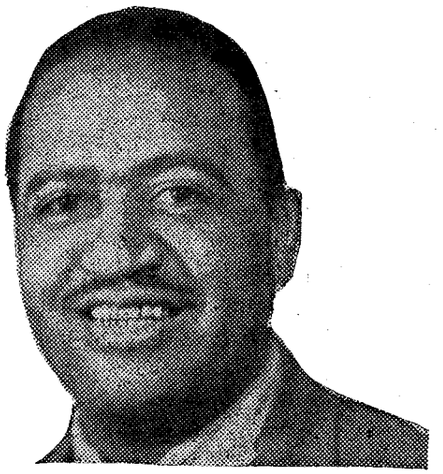
Robert Thompson

The Republican high command and the reactionary poll-tax Democrats are the chief vehicles of big business. They have a common get-tough policy with the American people and they have a get-tough policy with the peoples of the world.

Defeat of reaction requires the unity of labor, the farmers, the Negro people and all other progressives.

In New York State we face one of the nation's slickest reactionary Republican combinations headed by Governor Thomas E. Dewey. But to defeat this combination the people cannot rely on the Democratic Party which, while incorporating many progressive elements, nevertheless is not, under the wavering and capitulating leadership of President Truman, the instrumentality for overcoming reaction. The progressive voters are tired of shuttling between the two major parties. They want a third alternative, a mass people's party that can become a majority party in the state and nation. To the formation of such a party we dedicate our efforts.

In the given political situation in New York State we Communists have worked for an electoral alliance of labor, progressives and the Democrats against Dewey reaction. To effect that electoral alliance we Communists have subordinated all partisan considerations. We withdrew our whole ticket, save two candidates—Robert Thompson for Comptroller and Benjamin J. Davis for Attorney General.



Benjamin J. Davis, Jr.

We call for a return to the policy of Big Three unity as the only way to a durable peace; for an end to the Byrnes-Vandenberg atomic diplomacy; for a return to price control; for the nationalization of the basic food industries as the only way to guarantee the living standards of the masses; for a mass low-rent housing program, with veterans' preference; for legislation protecting labor's hard-won rights; for outlawing anti-Negro, anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic discrimination and all other forms of racial and religious hatred.

Our party fights for improvement in the American standard of life today and for a socialist America tomorrow.

We call on progressive New Yorkers to vote Communist on Row E for Thompson and Davis. Vote Communist on Row E *first;* then vote for all the rest of the candidates on Row C, the American Labor Party line.

That is the way New Yorkers can most effectively use their ballots against war, reaction and poverty and for peace, democracy and security.

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Defeat Reaction November 5th!

HOW YOU CAN BEAT DEWEY

By S. W. GERSON

IT MAY, of course, be only one of those old wives' tales that gain such phenomenal currency during an election campaign, but there are old residents of the Hudson Valley who insist that stealthy voices are heard of nights around a certain lonely tombstone in Hyde Park. These voices—so the story goes—belong to jittery Republicans who want to assure themselves that Franklin Delano Roosevelt is really dead.

The GOP Old Guard fears, above all, a resurrection of the Roosevelt foreign and domestic policy, and it dreads the thought of a broad coalition of labor, progressive and democratic forces similar to that which FDR headed for twelve years.

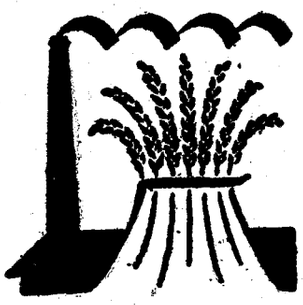
To prevent the formation of such a coalition is the principal strategy of the reactionary Republican forces of New York grouped about Gov. Thomas E. Dewey. Their main attack is levelled at the alliance against them with the objective, of course, of shattering it. New York's Democrats are a minority and can defeat the GOP only in alliance with labor, the Negro people and the organizations of the independent voters. That is, in the given New York political situation the only way the Democrats can win is by being part of the Roosevelt type of coalition, including Democrats, the American Labor Party, Communists and independent voters supporting such groups as CIO Political Action Committee, the National Citizens PAC and the Independent Citizens Committee.

Anti-Communism has become the chief weapon in the Republican arsenal. As used by Hitler before them, anti-Communism is the means the GOP is employing to divide and conquer.

Warren Moscow, well-known political writer of the New York *Times*, noted in a tour of the state the emphasis the Republicans are giving the anti-Communist issue. Writing from Utica on October 22, Mr. Moscow wrote: "The 'Perils of Communism' and 'The Links' of the Kremlin to Democratic Congressional candidates are being expounded daily in the rolling hills and fields of Oneida and Oswego Counties. . . . And the people of the cities are not being neglected on the 'issues.' In Utica, Rome and Oswego the words of Cardinal Spellman denouncing Communism are being circulated by [Republican Representative] Fuller's supporters."

That this strategy should be employed by the Republicans is understandable. But that elements of the anti-Dewey front should engage in it is less so. James M. Mead, Democratic candidate for governor and Herbert Lehman, candidate for US senator, both of whom have been endorsed by labor, have on a number of occasions fallen into the Republican trap and mouthed Red-baiting slogans. Mead, who is of the Roman Catholic faith, seems to feel that he is especially called upon to emulate Mr. Dewey's Red-baiting. He, in particular, has felt it necessary to attack the Yugoslav government and its trial of Archbishop Stepinac, who was convicted of treason to his own country in the war against the Axis.

This, of course, is doing the anti-Dewey alliance no good. It is jeopardizing the entire progressive program on which both men stand and tends to demoralize the progressives, who are the strongest and most active supporters of the anti-Dewey coalition. It is a design for defeat, not a plan for victory. It confirms again the Communist view of the Democratic Party as a house divided which cannot be relied upon by progressives as the chief weapon against reaction. The forces associated with James A. Farley, the Northern representative of the Dixie polltaxers, are still powerful within the Democratic Party. In a basic sense their foreign and domestic policies dovetail with those of the Republican Dewey machine. If Mead and Lehman are today faced with an uphill struggle—and they are—the responsibility in no small measure rests with those Democrats who have failed to cleanse their party of Farleyism.



Communist Party Emblem.

THE situation is tough, but by no means impossible. Statewide registration has hit a new high with more than 6,000,000 persons eligible to vote. This is an increase of sixty percent over the 1942 figures and an 8% increase over statewide registration in 1938, the last peacetime election.

In New York City the increase is even more marked, being a 28% rise over 1942 and 11% over 1938.

Registration smashed the myth of apathy and can smash the myth of invincibility of Governor Dewey as effectively as the myth of Nazi invincibility was smashed at the gates of Stalingrad in 1943. But that requires the generation of a crusading spirit such as that shown by labor, progressive and New Deal forces in the 1944 election. Thus far only the labor and progressive forces have carried forward the good fight with any effectiveness. They have coupled their fight with struggles around specific issues like housing and given support to the veterans' housing movement and the historic veterans' sit-down in the State Senate last month.

The Republican high command sought to interpret the increased registration as a protest registration, primarily a protest of meat-hungry voters against the Truman administration. This formulation has some

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elements of truth. The voters are obviously dissatisfied with the Truman administration, but from this it does not follow that they will march *en masse* to the polls under the banners of die-hard Republicanism. If anything, a certain polarization among the voters can be noted in the registration figures. Certain working-class districts have increased their registration, as in the Bronx, as have certain Republican silk-stocking districts. In short, the signs point to an increased Republican vote, and an increased *independent* vote cast outside of the framework of the two major parties. It is the latter vote which is of the highest significance.

In part, this will be reflected in the Communist and American Labor Party vote. In certain districts, however, the progressive voters will find their efforts focalized around specific candidates. This is true, above all, in the epic battle Rep. Vito Marcantonio, of New York's 18th Congressional District, is waging against what is, in effect, a bipartisan coalition. Despite the fact that he has both the Democratic and American Labor Party nominations, Marcantonio has the opposition of many Democratic captains, who are wielding the knife in the classic old-party fashion. But opposing this array is an army of trade unionists, progressives and just neighborhood voters to whom Marc's election is a sacred cause. He will undoubtedly get a big vote from persons who, whatever their remaining old-party ties, have been convinced by Marcantonio's record that he is a congressman unreservedly belonging to the people.

The mood among the voters of New York is not too different from that described by James Reston, writing from the Midwest in the New York *Times* of October 22: "One finds little conviction that the Republicans have the answer to any of the great questions that beset the nation, or even any of the other problems that annoy the electorate. There is, in fact, a protest against politicians in general, as if these politicians were persons remote and unconnected with the people. One feels, frankly, that if the people voted their true feelings and had two votes, they would cast one against the Democrats and one against the Republicans."

IN THIS situation of uncertainty, the clearest voice is that of the Communist Party. As far back as last Spring the Communists pointed out that the only way to defeat Dewey was by the formation of an anti-Dewey electoral alliance of labor, independent and Democratic forces associated on a progressive platform, directed, in the first instance, against Republican reaction and critical of the surrenders of President Truman to the GOP. Subordinating partisan considerations, the Communist Party, after nominating a ticket and collecting 21,000 signatures to place its ticket on the ballot, withdrew the bulk of its slate and left only two candidates in the field, Robert Thompson for Comptroller and Benjamin J. Davis for Attorney General. The Communists urged the voters that the most effective way to fight Dewey reaction was to unite on common candidates against the Republican ticket, but not to place reliance in the Democratic Party. The Communists urged the voters to support the anti-Dewey candidates on the American Labor Party line, this being possible because New York State is one of the few states where candidates can run on a number of tickets simultaneously.

VOTE FOR MARCANTONIO!

Candidate for reelection from the 18th Congressional District, Vito Marcantonio is the banner-bearer of independent political action in New York. Among other leading American Labor Party candidates are: Adam Clayton Powell, 22nd Congressional District, Manhattan; Vincent J. Longhi, 12th Congressional District, Brooklyn; Charles A. Collins, 21st Senatorial District, Manhattan (sole Negro candidate for the State Senate); Leo Isacson, 13th Assembly District, Bronx; and Samuel Kaplan, 24th Assembly District, Brooklyn.

●

Pursuing an independent line within the framework of a coalition policy the Communists have contributed greatly to clarity among the progressive voters. The Communists have hammered away at the Byrnes-Vandenberg get-tough policy and have helped mobilize support behind the Henry Wallace foreign policy. Communists have been bold in the demand for nationalization of the meat industry and in the fight in housing.

The Communists have been the one voice pointing the way out of the recurrent mad cycle of boom and bust, feast and famine, that is capitalism, and have raised before the voters of New York the perspective of a socialist America, in which the means and machinery of production and distribution are owned by the people who enjoy the fruits of their labor. Significantly the Communists have been the only party to put forward a Negro for statewide office, indicating a deep understanding of the demand of the Negro people for equality and dignity.

The two candidates of the Communist Party symbolize the fight of the Communists against reaction. Robert Thompson, party state chairman and candidate for Comptroller, was a volunteer in the famed Lincoln Battalion and was one of the youngest commanders of that immortal group in its death struggle with Franco fascism in Spain. He served with distinction in the 32nd (Red Arrow) Division, winning the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in New Guinea action.

Benjamin J. Davis, elected to the City Council by both Negro and white voters in Manhattan in 1943 and re-elected by a larger vote in 1945, is a symbol of the new leadership coming forward among the Negro people. Councilman Davis has been associated with every struggle of the Negro people throughout his adult life.

New York NEW MASSES readers can use their ballot most effectively by voting for the two Communist candidates, first on Row E and then voting for the other candidates on the American Labor Party line on Row C.

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Defeat Reaction November 5th!

COALITION IS THE ANSWER

By A. B. MAGIL

Seattle.

SEATTLE rubbed the mist out of its eyes and lay pulsating and warm in the lap of Puget Sound. "How's business?" I asked the cab driver. "Oh it's O.K., but compared to what it was during the war it's poor and going down all the time." "Why is that?" "I guess because of the insecurity. The average working man feels worried and when he feels worried he don't spend."

Yes, in Seattle, as in other places, this Indian summer of the postwar boom is full of unquiet. The economic atmosphere smells of rain—and worse. But in Seattle, more than in any American city I have visited, one feels the power of the progressive movement. Here in the logging country, where once the Populists and later the general strike held sway, progressivism itself is cast in the Paul Bunyan mold. The Democratic Party in this state is the most advanced in the Union. Its leadership consists predominantly of men and women who think and act with Henry A. Wallace and Claude Pepper. And into this party has flowed the rich sap that once was the Washington Commonwealth Federation, a political coalition which made history in the pre-war period.

Sparking the Democratic Party is its executive secretary, Jerry O'Connell, former Congressman from Montana. Before the war he fought for Republican Spain and for a quarantine-the-aggressors foreign policy and earned the hatred of the Anaconda Copper Co. and the other monopoly interests that dominate his home state. The Democratic members of Congress from Washington, Senators Hugh Mitchell and Warren Magnuson, and Reps. Hugh DeLacy, John Coffee, Henry Jackson and Charles Savage (all of whom except Magnuson are up for reelection), have probably the highest progressive scoring record of any Congressional delegation. That is why big business, acting through the Republican Party, is sparing neither cash nor cajolery to oust them. The Republicans in this state find it expedient at times to speak in dulcet tones and to put on the mask of liberalism—the better to eat you with, my dear. They believe this is their year, and it would be foolhardy to deny that anything less than the hardest kind of battle faces each of the Democratic candidates. Running against Senator Mitchell is a shrewd operator named Harry Cain, who calls himself a "conservative liberal." A former professional actor, Cain has learned his lines well and requires only a minimum of prompting from Hearst's Seattle *Post Intelligencer*.

Chief target of the big business-GOP attack is DeLacy. This tall, good-looking former English teacher has in his first term proved himself one of the stalwarts of American progressivism. Senator Pepper has called him "a clear-sighted, strong-hearted defender of the Roosevelt foreign policy," and Henry Wallace has said: "He measures up to the highest standards of statesmanship and is one of the outstanding men in Congress." DeLacy came through a tough primary contest against a renegade liberal, Howard Costigan, who discovered that Red-baiting was not enough. DeLacy's Republican opponent, Homer R. Jones, a hack politician who was former state commander of the American Legion, is described in his official publicity as "a real American who thinks of Americans first"—which sounds faintly familiar. Today the drive against DeLacy—and through him against the entire progressive Democratic slate—is stronger than ever. In fact, Representative Coffee's opponent, Thor C. Tollefson, judging from his speeches, seems to be running against two men: Coffee and DeLacy—and it isn't certain which he wants to beat most.

ONE factor in the exceptional character of this state's Democratic Party is its democratic structure, starting at the precinct level. Registration is nonpartisan and any citizen can file as a candidate for precinct committeeman in the Democratic Party. Within ten days after their election, the precinct committeemen of the entire county meet and elect the county chairman and executive board, plus one man and one woman as members of the state committee. Thus the voters in the precincts exercise a very large measure of control over the party.

Apart from the character of the Democratic Party and most of its leadership, Washington's progressives have another major asset: the strength and unity of their political coalition which embraces a variety of organizations. At breakfast the other morning with several leading political figures I learned some of the details. There is a coordinating committee at the top which includes the Democratic Party, the CIO Political Action Committee, National Citizens PAC, a section of the AFL, the railroad brotherhoods, the Washington Pension Union, the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions, and two or three other groups. This committee guides and knits together the activity of thousands of devoted men and women—workers, farmers, small businessmen, professional people—who are working to keep reaction from capturing the state of Washington.

One of the weak spots in the coalition structure is the divided and equivocal attitude of the AFL leadership. This is particularly serious in a state in which the AFL is far stronger than the CIO. Dave Beck's Teamsters' Union, for example, is working for Senator Mitchell, but sabotaging the rest of the progressive slate. In Seattle there is strong Republican influence in the building trades, which are also under Beck's thumb. The state Federation of Labor is backing Mitchell, Coffee and Savage, but not DeLacy and Jackson. In refreshing contrast, Labor's Legislative Committee of Kitsap County (Bremerton), which has been set up by the AFL Central Trades and Labor Council and the Metal Trades Council in an area which includes the US Naval Yard, is energetically supporting DeLacy as well as Mitchell. Also behind DeLacy is the Interna-

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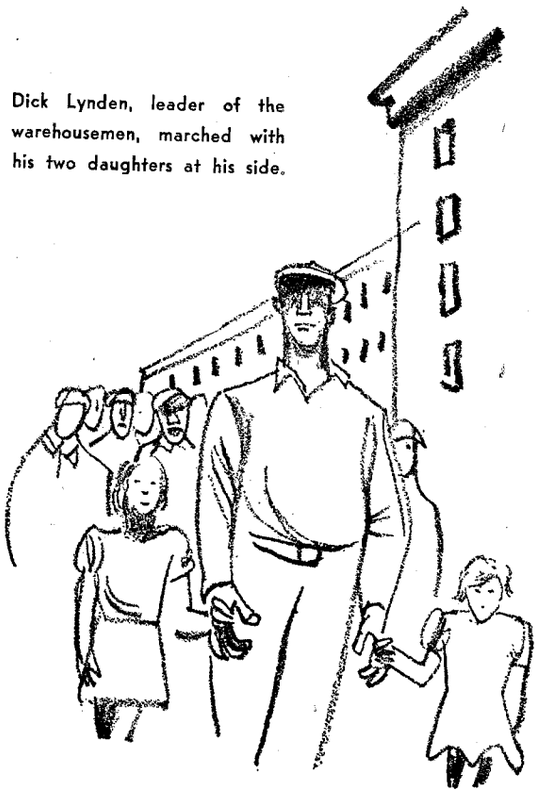
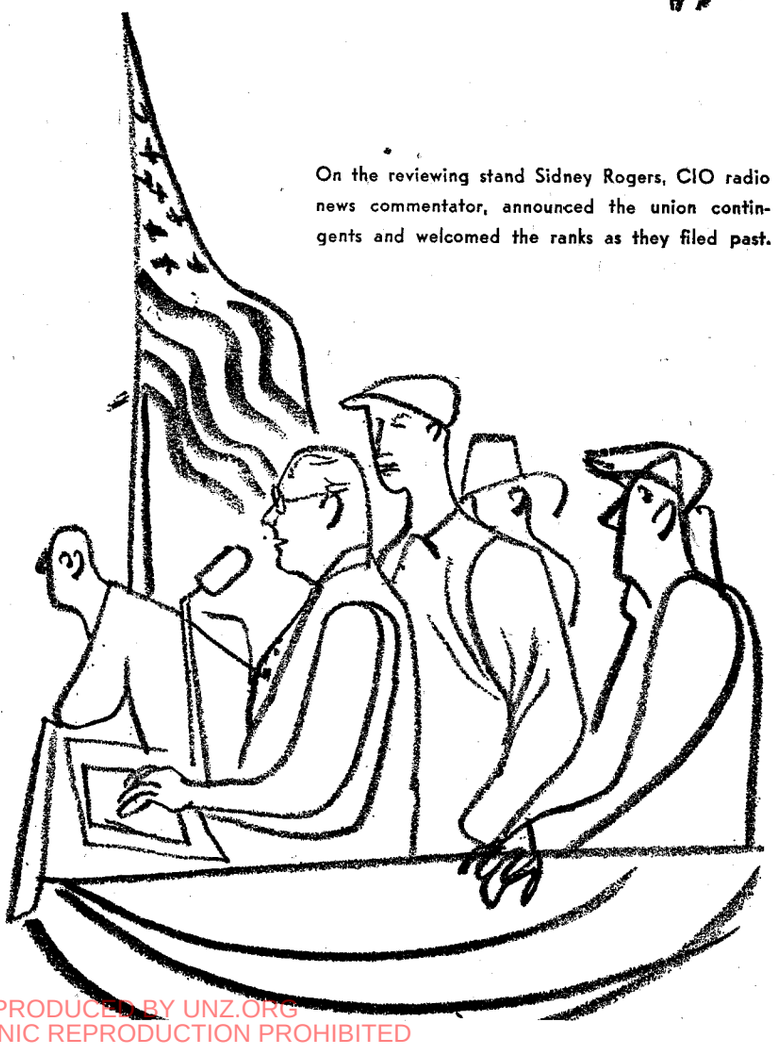
Refregier Sees Labor March in San Francisco

It was a beautiful sight to see the green banner of the CIO grow larger in the street, followed by the flags of the United Nations. First came the maritime workers, and then all the other CIO unions of the city.



Dick Lynden, leader of the warehousemen, marched with his two daughters at his side.



On the reviewing stand Sidney Rogers, CIO radio news commentator, announced the union contingents and welcomed the ranks as they filed past.

Spotted throughout the long line of march were bits of the workers' humor on the topics of the day.

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tional Association of Machinists, now an independent union: DeLacy was an active member of its Local 79 during the war when he swung a sledge-hammer in a shipyard. Incidentally, the Kitsap County legislative committee does more than appreciate a fine Congressman: it spoke up for Henry Wallace and endorsed the program of the recent Chicago Conference of Progressives, on which I reported in my article in the October 15 NEW MASSES. This clear-thinking labor group is also calling a conference of all AFL unions in the First Congressional District, which embraces King (Seattle) and Kitsap counties, to set up an AFL equivalent of PAC.

Another organization that contributes much to the state's political life is the Washington Pension Union. It was one of the mainstays of the Commonwealth Federation, and the struggles it has waged have won for the state's senior citizens the most liberal pensions and medical care in the country (even though they are still far from adequate.)

The Pension Union functions much in the manner of a trade union, looking after the grievances of its members, tackling such problems as housing, and seeing to it that the pension laws are properly enforced. The president of the organization, William J. Pennock, and one of the vice-presidents, state Senator Tom Rabbitt, are among the leaders of the progressive movement. The chief organ of that movement is a Seattle weekly, the *New World*. Its editor, Terry Pettus, a veteran newspaperman built like the hero of a Northwest Mounted tale, is also state chairman of CIO-PAC.

The Communists are a forceful arm of the coalition and add toughness and clarity to every progressive group. The Communist Party is also running two candidates of its own for the state legislature and two for county office. In Snohomish County, Frank Batterson, a war hero who was shot down with his plane over France, has the distinction of being not only the Communist candidate for county auditor, but the only opponent of the Republican Party, because the Democratic nominee was disqualified. In Spokane the Communist candidate for state representative is the party's section organizer, William Cumming, who is also a well known artist: he won first prize at the annual exhibit of the Seattle Art Museum.

I THINK it is generally true that political organization and activity in the area west of Chicago tend to be closer to the people, more fluid, less machine-made and machine-controlled than in the East. Members of state legislatures are often just ordinary folks—workers, farmers or small merchants—rather than the professional politicians or hard-boiled lawyers that one encounters in states like New York and Pennsylvania. And with the growth of the trade union movement labor men are increasingly found among the progressive candidates for public office: in California, for example, the Democratic candidate for lieutenant governor is state Senator John F. Shelley, president of the AFL Central Trades and Labor Council in San Francisco. (Incidentally, because of the fact that the GOP's Governor Warren captured the primary contests of both major parties, the only progressive candidate for governor of California is the Communist, Archie Brown, for whom a vigorous write-in campaign is being conducted.)

All this is bound up with the pervading anti-monopoly sentiment whose springs have run deep in various insurgent movements—though not deep enough to prevent reactionaries from trying to tap them for pro-monopoly ends. In the Northwest, particularly in Washington, one of the great anti-monopoly issues is public power. Grand Coulee and Bonneville dams hold intimations of the cheap and plentiful power that is within the people's grasp once the hold of the power trust is broken. This trust is represented by two large corporations, the Puget Sound Power and Light Co. and the Washington Water Power Co. Their own economic power is generated in Wall Street. A program of a different kind has been embodied in a bill sponsored by Senator Mitchell, a program for the development of the state's power resources through the creation of a Columbia Valley Authority along the lines of TVA.

Public power is the issue that provides the strongest link between the farmers and the labor movement in Washington, and they have joined hands in the Public Power League, which is a flourishing organization. State law also makes it possible to create local machinery for public ownership of power facilities. By majority vote public utility districts can be set up, usually on a county basis. The PUDs either try to buy out private power companies or to set up their own. In Seattle there is the phenomenon of both a private company and a municipally-owned system operating side by side and with considerable overlapping. Tacoma has a single municipally-owned system which has greatly reduced the citizens' electric bills. Because the issue of public power has gained such popular strength, the private interests and other reactionary forces are sponsoring in this election Initiative 166, designed to delay and block the purchase of private power facilities by the PUDs.

All these activities and issues and the vigor of the progressive forces combine to make Washington an exciting state. One might think that with so strong and cohesive a movement it ought to be smooth sailing in the election. The fact is, however, that apart from the confusions sown by a monopoly-controlled press and radio, the policies of the Truman administration have spread, here as elsewhere, so deep a blanket of apathy over the voters that the real problem is getting them to register and go to the polls on November 5. To me the dangers which lash at the gains that the people of this state have won with so much effort point up how painfully insecure and limited are the victories of democracy under capitalism. Yet whatever the fortunes of the election, the coalition created here will not easily be shattered. And it will play its part in any nationwide movement for a new anti-monopoly people's party that may develop after November.

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Defeat Reaction November 5th!

SLOW LYNCHING IN BALTIMORE

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Baltimore, Md.

FROM the doctor's waiting room I could see children playing on the sidewalk. A sidewalk is the only place there is to play if you live in the 1400 block of East Monument Street, Baltimore. In the late afternoon October sunlight a small boy in a big overseas cap plays hopscotch with a little white girl and an older Negro girl. The street is a lively one. I watch, while the doctor's long line of patients thins. The sunlight fades and the quaint old gas lamps which still are used in many sections of Baltimore begin to glow. The narrow hilly street teems with traffic. Undersized streetcars clang past. They are, of course, manned by white motormen, though most of their passengers are colored. Across the street, the sagging brick houses built in another century take on charm in the dusk, as happens in Baltimore's narrow, old streets when night hides the alleys, the privies and the decay of years, and the rats come out to search for food.

While I waited to see the Negro physician, Dr. Ralph Young, I studied an article in the American Medical Assn. *Journal* by Dr. Curt Richter of Johns Hopkins, who made a study of rat bites. Having stumbled onto a poison which rats would devour he developed it for use, and the university sponsored an experiment in rat eradication by city blocks, collecting 156,210 dead rats in a year. The city has taken it over, but last year there were four cases of rat-bite fever at Johns Hopkins alone. Meanwhile Dr. Richter found that from 1939 to 1943 there were eighty-seven cases of rat bite treated at Hopkins and fifty-one others reported to the Health Department, although the ailment is not reportable, so that there were actually many more.

No clearer picture of the results of squeezing Baltimore's 225,000 Negroes into a ghetto of dwellings whose maximum capacity is 70,000 is needed than Dr. Richter's study reveals. He found that ninety-three cases of rat bites were in a two-mile square area near the hospital, of whom "a great majority were infants under one year." In a house to house canvass of part of the area, it was found that "in those heavily rat-infested districts most people apparently accepted rat bites as being inevitable," or more would have been reported. He declared that "most . . . occurred in a part of the Eastern Health District which has very poor housing and living conditions and is inhabited largely by colored people. . . . Almost all of the rat bites . . . were located in blocks with a high percentage of colored people."

Of sixty-five treated from the hospital's own area, 10.7 percent developed rat-bite fever. "The parts of the body most favored by the rats were the fingers and hands. Twenty-five persons received multiple bites. . . . One child was bitten on eleven different nights." And in dry clinical language he said: "It was concluded that the rat regards the sleeping infant or adult as a source of food. . . . Persons are much more apt to be bitten in a heavily infested district with poor housing and living conditions."

"Dr. Young," I said, when I was shown upstairs and confronted with a rotund, jolly-looking man who had told me on the phone to come any time before midnight but not to stay long, "I am looking into Jim Crow as it's practiced in a border state like Maryland. I figure it has something to do with lynching in the deep South, and that part of the big American Crusade to End Lynching that's now in progress ought to be to take a look around at these border states like Maryland and Missouri and Kentucky. And they tell me you know a fair amount about Jim Crow in eastern Baltimore."

He chuckled at that, but I could see he was thinking of all the patients he still must see. Then I mentioned the Chick Webb memorial.

That he could not resist. Chick Webb, now dead, was a hunchbacked, once tubercular Baltimore boy who became a famous New York band leader. Dr. Young began talking, pouring out the story of the long struggle he and his people have made since 1938, to try to get a recreation center for the kids and old folks.

Because a political campaign is on, and Mayor Theodore R. McKeldin is the Republican candidate for governor, the $10,000 the Negro people themselves contributed for a memorial to the late band leader—a recreation center for the Negroes on the east side—has been added to by $129,000 McKeldin helped wring from the city council. After infinite stalling on the part of the city, enough money is now in sight to reconstruct the old ice house around the corner from the doctor's office, which he bought for $5,000. Later the second unit, containing a swimming pool and gym, will be added. At present there is only one swimming pool for the entire Negro population of Baltimore, one-fifth of the city's people—a little pool in Druid Hill Park.

In the course of his struggles to get the recreation center, Dr. Young went to the then Mayor Jackson. "He kept stalling, and finally said he'd have a survey of needs made. I told him it didn't take a survey to see the needs. The colored children on the whole east side had just one spot to play in, a lot at Asquith and Fayette. I told him it was the only democratic spot I'd found in the city of Baltimore. Colored and white played together. Then they Jim Crowed it and called it a colored play lot. But the white children keep coming. You can't keep 'em apart when they're children."

For four years the Negro people have been trying to get an institution to care for Negro child wards of the city, said Dr. Young, the only Negro on the Municipal Welfare Board. As it is, they live in foster homes "under terrible conditions," while the city pays their board. For four years the Welfare Board has asked the city to put aside $100,000 for an institution, and each year the city council has wiped it off the budget.

Despite the astronomical incidence of tuberculosis among Negroes in Baltimore, there is no place where a Negro suffering from tuberculosis can get surgi-

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cal treatment. The death rate for tuberculosis among whites in Baltimore in 1945 was 46.1 per 100,000 persons, whereas for colored it was 231.9. In 1944 Negroes dying from t.b. were 239.8 per 100,000, tuberculosis claiming more Negroes than any other disease but one, while for whites the rate was 48.5 and the disease ranked seventh as a cause of death. The decrease in incidence of t.b. among whites was attributed (Baltimore *Health News*, March, 1946) to the large number of persons receiving X-rays in 1944 in industry. This group was "largely composed of white persons."

The ironclad Jim Crow existing for students at Johns Hopkins University's famed medical school has been cracked in one respect. Four of the eighteen Negro doctors under Dr. Young in the city health department's venereal disease section are getting training at Johns Hopkins to conduct teaching clinics for the city. At first the university wanted to take only Dr. Young. "Yes," he laughed, "I was told, 'Never before has a Negro physician written a prescription on Johns Hopkins stationery.' But when I wrote a letter commending the nurses and doctors on their cooperation with us colored doctors, it was put on the bulletin board."

But the hospital does not accept Negro citizens of the US as private patients, although Negroes from other countries are accepted.

I asked Dr. Young about other hospitals. "Most of them have a few beds for Negroes," he said. "But someone from St. Joseph's came to me and asked why I didn't send any colored people there. I replied, 'I will, just as soon as you remove that sign, "Colored Entrance on Huffman Street".' " At St. Agnes' there are no beds for colored. And at the University of Maryland hospital the sign reading "Colored Entrance" is cut in stone.

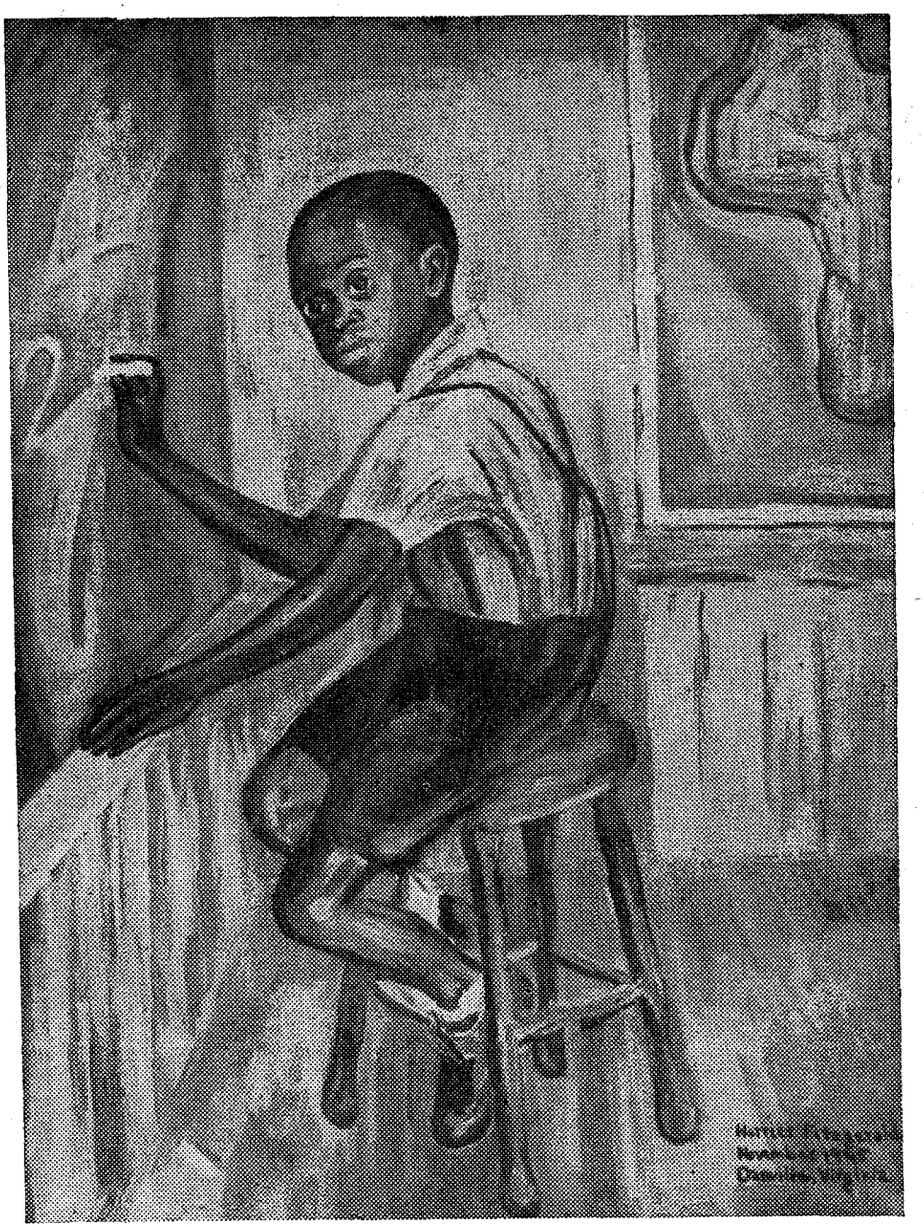
A DESULTORY rain beat down on Druid Hill Avenue a few days later as I walked from the *Afro-American* newspaper office to Biddle Street. Houses that must have been built a hundred years ago, with ancient square paned windows (and with equally ancient privies in the back), crowd the sidewalk. Baltimore is known as the "city of the white stone steps," or stoops, but here there are few steps; doors sag on hinges and passageways between houses are filled with refuse. A little Negro boy in an Army coat sizes too big sloshes along barefoot in the rain.

Near Biddle Street is School No. 131, one of two schools about a hundred years old, both, of course, used for Negroes. This was built in 1850. The "playground" is a narrow brick-floored passageway with a basketball hoop at one end. Twenty-five of Baltimore's schools were declared obsolete twenty-five years ago; forty-one obsolete schools still are in use.

I wait in one of the classrooms to get special permission from the Board of Education to go through the school. Broken panes of the windows are neatly boarded over. Huge coal-burning stoves are in each room. On the blackboard in front of me are the moving words of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," with its final lines,

He has loosed the fateful lightning of
his terrible swift sword,
His truth is marching on.

Boys pass through going from one classroom to another, as they must, because there is no hallway, no passageway, in the building. Some are big boys, seventeen years old, for it is a school for boys who have been a little slow in their grades, a "special educational and vocational" school. Some of the boys smile shyly. All appear eager, responsive. Yet the truth as it is marching on for them includes this dreary, primitive school



Charles Barzansky Galleries.

"Boy with Chalk," oil by Harriet Fitzgerald.

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building which doubtless would not be in use if there were no segregation, and clothing eked out through furtive contributions of teachers who collect shoes and coats all year.

I am given permission to see the school, but the teacher assigned to me warns against quotation. We go outside to see the added flimsy structure which houses all the lavatory equipment—six primitive toilets and a trough for urinating. At least it is painted now, I'm told, and "wonderful compared to what it used to be."

This school finished second in a school league in basketball. The boys love basketball above all else—but have to go elsewhere to practice. They like their wood and metal work, too, and art. The teacher tells me there are some signs of progress in the cultural world. The white symphony orchestra was conducted recently by the colored symphony orchestra leader, A. Jack Thomas, and played Thomas' own composition. The white symphony plays in the Jim Crow Lyric Theater, which turned down a proposed National Maritime Union-sponsored concert featuring Paul Robeson because the union would not agree that Negroes be barred. But the white symphony now plays two of its six performances for school kids in Negro schools.

Baltimore is a city rich in cultural life, with its world-renowned Peabody Conservatory of Music and excellent Maryland Institute of Art, but they are Jim Crow. It is a try-out town for theater, it brings a wide variety of symphonies and world-famous artists—but while Negroes can attend any of its six horse-racing tracks, they can't take part in this cultural life.

So far we have been looking at the "slow lynching" in Maryland. But records show thirty-two lynchings on Maryland's Eastern Shore since 1882, the last one that of George Armwood in October, 1933, just fourteen miles from Chance, Md., the scene of a crime for which two Negro youths were tried. Both Weldon Jones, eighteen, and Holbrook Jones, thirteen, two of nine children who helped their father in the oyster-dredging of the region, were sentenced to hang. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People obtained a new trial, and the thirteen-year-old was freed in Baltimore. The older boy, in the death cell now for two years, was sentenced again to be hanged a couple of weeks ago. The NAACP is appealing on the basis that the excitement in the community and their knowledge of previous lynchings were factors in forcing a confession from the boys through fear. The parents fled the community.

Another type of "legal lynching" is the terrorizing of the Negro community by Baltimore policemen. Since May, 1946, five Negroes have been shot and killed by police bullets. A grand jury is now looking into crime and the police department, but there is no assurance it will look into the matter of police brutality. The only punishment that has been meted out is that some two weeks ago two officers were sentenced to ninety days in jail for conspiracy to suppress evidence. The fact that they killed a Negro to suppress the evidence was passed over.

"We finally got one case to the grand jury," said NAACP attorney W. A. C. Hughes, Jr. "A Negro private, Thomas Broadus, father of two sets of twins, was accosted by Patrolman Edward Bender in February, 1942, as he left a tavern. Bender, who had shot a man in 1940, asked him what he wanted. He said he wanted a cab, and with his companions started to get in a bootleg cab. Bender stopped him, got abusive, began beating him with his billy, and the boy grabbed it to protect himself and knocked him down. The policeman got up, Broadus ran, Bender took aim and shot him. The Negro crawled under a car, Bender followed and shot again. The grand jury, the first to consider such a case, decided he should stand trial and presented him. State's Attorney Bernard Wells delayed writing up the indictment, and the grand jury 'reconsidered' the case and 'ignored' it. It's on the docket just like that—'ignored'."

A RECENT report issued by the CIO-PAC declared Negro voters hold the margin of victory in fifty-eight non-Southern Congressional districts in the November elections. This is in addition to districts where they have long been a decisive factor, such as New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Detroit.

Politically Maryland is like Missouri and other "border" states whose representatives have bad records on major legislation concerning minorities. Only one member of the Missouri delegation in the House (John B. Sullivan, D.) replied "Yes" to the NAACP questionnaire as to whether he signed the discharge petition to force the anti-lynching bill to the floor, and only Reps. Sullivan and John J. Cochran, veteran pro-labor Missouri Democrat, said "Yes" to the question as to whether they signed the petition on FEPC.

In Maryland, while Negro voters cannot stomach the reactionary Democrat Rep. Dudley G. Roe, from the eastern shore, who replied "No" to both questions, his Republican opponent shows every sign of being just as bad as the fabulously reactionary Missouri Republicans, Reps. Max Schwabe and Walter C. Ploeser. Fortunately Rep. H. Streett Baldwin, who had little chance of re-election to the House, according to Negro leaders, has been liquidated by his decision to run in the primary for governor. I have before me a sample of his campaigning—a page ad in the *Catholic Review* of June 21 beginning "CIO-PAC Says 'Beat Baldwin!'" and winding up "If you want your state government Democratic and free from radical influence then vote Baldwin for governor!"

Not that William Preston Lane, Jr., who beat Baldwin in the primary and is now running against Republican Mayor McKeldin of Baltimore for the governorship, eschewed Red-baiting himself. He was just less violent. It is true that the CIO-PAC is supporting Lane, but the Communist Party of Maryland is supporting neither candidate, and in its new newspaper, the *Clarion*, it blasts both the Democratic and Republican Parties for failure to include a single plank even mentioning the pressing needs of the Negro people in Maryland, and declares the Democratic Party has "betrayed the progressive program of the late President Roosevelt."

All the candidates, in fact, have indulged in a campaign thick with meaningless Red-baiting, while Mayor McKeldin, whom many Negroes are supporting because of small concessions, such as his placing one Negro on the Board of Education, contented himself with speaking on such vital issues as the "need for hundreds of miles of improved roads in Maryland." At least Lane as Attorney General was instrumental in having the troops called out to maintain order at a threatened lynching on the eastern shore.

But in the race for senator neither candidate is any great shakes on any issue of real interest to the people, so far as I could discover. Brig. Gen. D. John Markey, Republican candidate for the Senate, had the temerity on October

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17 to tell 400 veterans at the University of Maryland that he would halve the US payroll. He also charged "alien labor leaders" in the CIO and PAC had "too often got this country by the throat." He got a barrage of questions from the vets, such as: "What do you mean by alien leadership in the CIO?" and "What is your policy toward Russia?" When he said he meant by "alien leadership" the "leaders of the CIO and PAC who have been cited by the House Un-American Activities Committee," a vet called, "Can you name some?" and there was silence from the general.

Going through the files of clippings on police brutality at the *Afro-American* office, I came across a letter Gov. Herbert R. O'Connor, Democratic candidate for Senator, wrote Feb. 3, 1942, to Mrs. Lillie Jackson, head of the NAACP in Baltimore, in reply to a request that representatives of various organizations made to see the governor regarding Baltimore police brutality. The Baltimore police are a part of the state organization in Maryland. It was at the time Pvt. Thomas Broadus was killed by Policeman Bender. Broadus was the ninth Negro killed by police bullets in three-and-a-half years. Wrote the governor to Mrs. Jackson: "This is a most serious situation but I must bear in mind that the legal processes must not be ignored. . . .

"You state that it is felt 'that a colored citizen even in the United States Army has no protection.' This statement, of course, assumes that no justification existed for the policeman's act. I feel that we should hear both sides of the matter before reaching our conclusions. . . ." He didn't see the delegation.

But while I found some Negroes who will support O'Connor and even more who favor McKeldin as against Lane, the only candidacy which evokes any enthusiasm is that of Charles A. Reid for the Maryland House of Delegates. Reid, a Republican, is a PAC-endorsed candidate, and all of PAC's ward clubs in the fourth district will concentrate on getting Reid into the state legislature. If he wins it will be the first time in the state's history that Jim Crow in the legislature will have been cracked. Other Negroes have run for the office but Reid has broken away from the Republican Party machine grip to the extent of campaigning on a platform of fighting for "improved housing, social legislation, administration of justice and full citizenship privileges" for all "regardless of race, creed, religion or national origin."

WHAT IS JAZZ?

A discussion of the origin and development of jazz in relation to the national question. People's music versus monopoly domination.

By S. FINKELSTEIN

JAZZ, we now know, is neither merely a dance music nor a music created by some gifted individuals with a talent for improvisation. It is a national music of the Negro people, as were the spirituals and blues. It is also a national music of the white people of America. It has furthermore produced a body of music, through the phonograph record, which—whether created by improvisation, composition or a combination of both methods — now stands as an admirable contribution to American and to world music. And like every other healthy product of American culture, it is now fighting for its life against the forces of monopoly within the cultural world which would smother it out of existence.

Our understanding of jazz has proceeded slowly. The first books to appear, such as Hugues Panassie's *Hot Jazz*, ignored folk roots and leaned heavily upon a flock of modern arrangements which are now ignored as important music. Each book to appear since Panassie has started by exposing the errors of its predecessors, added some new and valuable information, and then itself fallen into a mass of errors. Rudi Blesh, in his *Shining Trumpets*,* follows the same pattern.

Blesh brings to his study of jazz an equipment full of promise. He has a passionate love for the greatest jazz music, the small band blues improvisations known generally as "New Orleans" music. He has a musical knowledge which enables him to consider jazz in the perspective of world musical culture. Aided by transcriptions made by the composer Lou Harrison, which appear in the appendix of the book, he analyzes brilliantly the fundamental idiom of Negro folk music and jazz, from its African origins to the complex, many-voiced improvisations of New Orleans bands. He hates the exploitation suffered by the Negro people, and sees the progress of jazz as a social as well as musical problem.

All this is to the good. And yet he fumbles in his project, because of a failure to grasp the problems he himself raises. They are the problems of the national question, and of the possibilities for the growth of a national music in America.

The idealist critic, wholly subjective, tends to emphasize differences between one music and another, ignoring the growth of one into the other. The mechanical materialist on the other hand tends to emphasize the similarities and ignore the differences, the new complex unities that appear with the process of change. The latter is Blesh's most frequent error. He does an excellent job of analyzing African music, showing how its elements, carried to America, entered into the music of the Negro spiritual. He insists rightly upon an appreciation of African culture for its own high achievements. He shows how the derogation of African culture has been used as a reactionary argument to help fasten the present exploitation upon the Negro.

The fact remains, however, that there is a difference between showing the fruitful use of African elements in Negro folk music, and claiming that this is an African music. Such mechanical theorizing distorts the entire nature of music as an art of communication. Blesh says, "For jazz, regardless of the

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* SHINING TRUMPETS, *by Rudi Blesh. Knopf. $5.*

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origin of its melodies, is a *manner* of playing derived directly from the music of the West African coast." To disregard melody, however, is to disregard the most life-giving element of music, the basic pattern which, uniting single notes and accents, becomes a unit of human and emotional communication. A melody must not be confused with a tune, of course. And a melody, or melodic phrase, must be played with the correct manner, with all the nuances of rhythm, accent and timbre, even intonation, that belong to it. But this is as true of a Schubert song or Chopin mazurka as it is of a blues. And it is still the matter, not the manner, which makes music an art involving people's emotions and human relationships.

THE melodies of the spirituals were different from the hymn tunes out of which some of them came. They were also different from African music, however. Both of these origins combined to form a new flowering of music, which was a music that characterized and spoke for the Negro people of America. Blesh, riding his Africa theory, misses much of this quality that spirituals had as a practical, functioning, fighting music, with new human and social patterns. A Negro woman singing a play song becomes to him "the leader calling and the tribal chorus responding; her hands and feet are the urgent, ominous, speaking drums. She is at once the slave and the free uncaptured Negro living still in West Africa."

Throughout his treatment of Negro music, he emphasizes too much this nostalgic character, his style moving similarly from clear and illuminating factual prose into misty poetry. When he gets to the blues, he misses the fact that while the continuity of Negro culture is present, the amalgamation of fresh elements becomes even greater, and the new melodic and structural forms that result are even more completely characteristic of the Negro as an organic part of the American people, expressing in his music the new conditions of life and social patterns that followed emancipation. This character of the blues music can be seen when we realize how broadly it becomes a national music, used by poor white as well as Negro, sending out roots which divided and flowered into a new, rich and varied American folk music and poetry of the South, Middle West and far West.

He brilliantly disposes of the charge that the blues are connected with degradation and vice, but even in answering this charge falls into a new error. "Steamboat horn and locomotive's whistle; the spiritual ringing and rocking in a bare, small church; the racking sobs of bereaved slave mothers; gay, bright tinkle of ragtime . . . the delicious, yellow, brassy blare of the parade band—*in all of this, a lost race is searching for home.*" The message of this music, however, is precisely that the Negro people are not a lost race. They have a home, which they are trying to make more livable and tolerable, using music as an enrichment of their social life and as a weapon in their struggle. We can see the power of jazz as a weapon when we realize how the audience which increasingly welcomed jazz as an American music became a new and powerful force joining the fight against Jim Crow in all forms of American life. And this struggle in turn has helped jazz itself to discover and advance creative Negro musicians, and provided new opportunities for them to be heard and to make a living.

WHEN we came to the rich flowering out of the blues into the complex vocal and instrumental music of New Orleans jazz, we can see clearly that it was the Negro's home, and the kind of home he had, which gave its form and content to this music. The amalgamation of fresh music and human elements became even richer. Involved in this music were Spanish and Creole songs; the formal structure of rags and Sousa marches, quadrilles and cakewalks; the possibilities opened up by the adoption of new musical instruments, and by freer patterns of living; the sense of national character still living, and even stronger, in these new social conditions, expressed in the communal character of the collective improvisation of the music, and in the manner in which the listeners reacted to each nuance of the players.

Blesh's description of typical works

of New Orleans music stands among the best pages in his book. But he is still fascinated by his principle of African continuity, and so denies the values of his own analysis. This music to him is still nostalgic and formless. Yet one of the new qualities of New Orleans music, the music of Jelly-Roll Morton, Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, Johnny Dodds and Louis Armstrong records, is precisely an element of musical form. Improvisational as these works may be, they yet emerge tightly organized, with a beginning, middle and end; a rounded out, meaningful, artistic experience.

From this point on, mistakes pile up, and offer a picture of a writer denouncing reaction yet, through unclarity, falling into agreement with it. The white chauvinist claims that jazz is foreign to America—African and barbaric. Blesh, throughout his appreciation of jazz, reemphasizes that it is African, in spite of its century and a half of existence in America in new and productive forms. The white chauvinist claims that white musicians should not mix with Negroes, or play hot jazz. Blesh approves of white musicians playing jazz in principle, but denounces almost all of them—Bix Beiderbecke, Jack Teagarden, Joe Sullivan, Art Hodes—for not playing "Negroid" enough. The chauvinist, academician and snob, claims that jazz cannot contribute anything to a broader American culture of composed and concert music. Blesh says the same thing, except that he tries to build jazz up as an independent music system so wonderfully formless, and so modern,

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that it can replace all of Western musical culture.

The snob points jeeringly to the fact that jazz, for all its high hopes, seems to be dying out. Blesh, for all his announcements of a wonderful future, disapproves of every deviation from classic New Orleans principles. All modern forms and textures of jazz are to him dilutions and hybrid products conceived under the disastrous cloud of commercialism. The chauvinist draws a Jim Crow line against Negro musicians in symphony orchestras, concert and opera. Blesh berates all Negro musicians who try to break into this field, because to him they are betraying the genius of their race.

The fact is that jazz is hampered in its progress and growth by the present monopolization of all the means of popular artistic communication, which is destroying the possibility of integrity in popular art, and of the entrance of fresh human and experimental qualities. Commercialism was at first a benefit to jazz and American music. It gave the Negro musicians a market for their wares. It enabled jazz to spread from the South, to Chicago, New York and the West Coast. It brought the great boon of the phonograph record, through which musicians could study their own and other's achievements. It enabled a few of the Negro musicians to rise out of the narrow, poverty-stricken environment in which jazz had been born. It enabled some to get better instruments, and to attain a more finished technique. It brought fruitful collaboration between white and Negro musicians. It gave the Negro artist a chance to assert his right to take part in the entire stream of music, from symphony to opera.

Qualities were necessarily lost. Jazz music, facing the market, had to lose some of its communal folk character, and take on a more individualist set of forms, emphasizing the solo variations and expansions of a melody, the large band, and the use of harmony in arrangements. The Tin Pan Alley tune tended to replace the blues, thus giving rise to the misconception that jazz was only a "manner" of playing, not a musical folk language. It was nevertheless a fresh development, and brought a richly worthwhile new musical literature to the American scene.

To say as Blesh does, for example, that "as for jazz, the Duke has never played it," and that his work is "ridiculous and pretentious," does not make sense. Ellington's music, as exhibited in a stream of fine records, is wholly of the blues. It is the blues, of course, changed to fit the new textures of the fifteen-piece orchestra of brass, reed and percussion, but the change is carried out with the freshness and inventiveness of a fine artist. Furthermore Ellington, in his struggle against lucrative song plugging, in his continual writing of genuine orchestral music rather than arrangements of Tin Pan Alley tunes, has shown himself a leading figure in the fight against the degradation of popular music. It was certainly better for American music to have such work than to have Ellington's men playing over and over again innumerable "classic" versions of "Dippermouth" and "Winin' Boy Blues."

Similarly the members of "People's Songs," far from diluting jazz, are trying to preserve, in the light of contemporary needs, the meaningful content and fighting quality of American folk music of which jazz is a part. To argue that because of the greatness of New Orleans music, musicians must go back to it as a pure form, and ignore any dilutions, is to argue not for "classic jazz," but for what must inevitably turn out to be a barren neo-classicism, a reiteration of old patterns until they become platitudes. And on the practical side, for all the distinction between the greatness of New Orleans music and the poverty that surrounded it, a return must inevitably be a return to these conditions of narrow and poverty-stricken life.

Blesh's argument is similar to that of other cultural prophets who lament present-day decadence. Some, in music, place the decadence after Wagner; others after Beethoven; still others, after Bach, or the Middle Ages. But whatever the glories of the communal art of the Middle Ages, and its achievements were truly glorious, the cry to "go back" is a cry to go back to poverty, ignorance and semi-slavery. The history of every successful people's fight for national existence and freedom is one of fruitful collaboration with other peoples fighting for freedom and democracy, employing whatever is living in the national heritage in terms of the full opportunities and new tools brought by a changing world. The case is the same for national cultures, which have grown by using the folk heritages of the past boldly and freely in terms of the most living and suggestive forms offered by world culture.

Blesh's characterization of Western musical form and structure as static and outmoded, compared to the jazz methods of movement and improvisation, is musical idiocy. There is of course the academic musical form which is taught in conservatories, truly barren and hampering to music. But the forms of a Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Verdi, Moussorgsky, using imaginatively all the lessons of musical knowledge to give their national backgrounds a new and flourishing development, are something quite different. Such forms came into being because they enabled the composer to address a broader public through a functional avenue of social intercourse, like the concert hall and opera house, and to include in his music a richer complex of emotions, thoughts and human characterizations.

Improvisation and formal structure are not, as Blesh imagines, two mutually exclusive worlds. If Blesh examines more carefully the improvised work of all his great jazz musicians, he will find a slow process of composition, worked out from one musical performance to another, until a musical conception is rounded out and finished. Solos and musical conceptions by one artist are played note for note by others, as if they had been written down. Improvisation is a wonderful and necessary process that must be restored to popular music, so that musical performance will again take on a widespread folk and creative character. But to deny the role of knowledge, craft and scientific mastery of materials in music making, or of larger, studied forms necessary to fit broader avenues to an audience, is similar to denouncing the novel and drama in favor of improvised folk ballads, or the modern house in favor of the log cabin.

Jazz, today, does not offer a picture of musical health. Neither, for that matter, does any aspect of dominant American culture. The reason is the new stage of monopolization of all forms of popular art creation. It has destroyed not only the small band, in which a King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Johnny Dodds, and Muggsy Spanier learned their music, but the independent newspaper, the local theater, the cultural ferment which produced a Mark Twain, O. Henry, Walt Whitman, Thomas Nast and Art Young, and the early Eugene O'Neill. It kept out of the big money, and often drove out of any money, the

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very Negro musicians whose musical ideas it adopted, borrowed, diluted and made into a lucrative commodity. Increasingly one standardized product is made in one central office or studio, concocted to fit censored formulas, employing all the wits of the advertising industry for its popularization. The result is a synthetic product which dulls people's sensitivity to the languages of art as a medium for communication of fresh perceptions and honest thought; a pseudo-popular art, which is advertised as "what the people want" but is actually the face, in art, of monopoly capital and its publicity experts.

Mass production has made the commodity cheaper, but rising costs of production have brought the cultural domination of the banks, and made the entrance of the independent producer increasingly prohibitive. Faced by this monstrosity of our cultural life, not only folk and popular artists but artists of every form and style are engaged in a bitter struggle for their integrity, honesty and right of artistic growth.

THIS situation cannot be combatted by demanding, as Blesh does, that artists go back to pure folk patterns as they once existed, nor is it possible even to restore the freer market and more independent production of two and three decades ago. A study of the past is of the utmost importance, but only in using whatever the past offered in human and communal cultural values in terms of the needs of a society far greater in its possibilities of widespread human intercourse. One of the great qualities of folk and popular art is its boldness, its adaptability, its germinating power capable of producing the most surprisingly new and useful art patterns. The great national cultures of world history grew by assimilating their folk materials, with their human content and new structural ideas, to the great international formal traditions of the arts, using these traditions with the utmost boldness and imagination so that what arose was not an imitation but a fresh structure. Such was the national art of the Elizabethan drama, of the Irish drama and poetry, of Russian literature and music; such is the achievement of an Ives or Bartok in our own day, assimilating folk material to studied musical structures so that a new set of forms arises, with a new social, communicative content. Such is the significance of a Paul Robeson in American life, at once a leader of the Negro people and a leader in the international fight for democracy and the freedom of all peoples.

"Tap-dancer," sculpture by Nat Werner. A. C. A. Gallery.

Folk qualities as they existed in the past must be revived, but cannot alone suffice for a democratic culture. Such a culture must include the moving picture, radio and newspaper, the symphony, opera and mural painting; the most highly organized and complex forms of art. The struggle must take the form of art production sponsored by people's organizations, of the breakdown of Jim Crow in culture, of government sponsored art projects, and of the insistence by artists on the right to honesty and artistic growth even when working for a boss.

By barring the door to education, to formal structure, to the development of finished technique, to the healthy intermingling of many national backgrounds, Blesh in his enthusiasm actually closes the door to progress. He insults many Negro artists of our own day, both in jazz and in other fields, who are asserting their right to take part as equals in the entire stream of contemporary cultural life. He treats with contempt many white jazz musicians who are fighting to keep jazz healthy, and bring to it musical and imaginative qualities of their own. He does a most valuable job in showing how infinitely greater a true people's music is than the businessman manufactured product passed off as popular art. But he flits up and back between an enthusiasm for national freedom, in culture as well as politics, and a romantic nationalism that, because of its unreality, can do harm if taken seriously.

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THE WISE MAN, THE FOOL AND THE SLAVE

A Fable by LU HSUN

Irving Amen.

Lu Hsun, who was born in 1881 and died in 1936, has been called the Gorky of China because he declared war on the feudal traditions which enslaved her people. This fable is from the collection "Wild Grass." It exposed the serflike mentality of the unawakened people and the emptiness of liberal scholars who only talk but really despise the common man. Lu Hsun's "fool" is the new hero, ready for self-sacrifice and action.

Since Lu Hsun wrote, China has had less slaves and more "fools." Because he was the forerunner of this change in the sphere of literature, Lu Hsun will remain immortal. Mao Tse-tung, who has led the Chinese people in fighting slavery on many fronts, once said that "Lu Hsun is the road for modern Chinese culture." Lu Hsun's realism, he declared, is conscious and militant. It is the solid foundation for the new democratic culture.

A SLAVE always complains and seldom does more. Once there was a slave who met a Wise Man.

"Sir!" he said with deep grief, the tears running down his cheeks, "as you already know, the life I lead is utterly inhuman! I am not sure of even one meal a day, and if I do get it it is made of coarse grain husks which even a dog or a pig would not touch. And there is only one bowl, and. . . ."

"That is really pitiful!" said the Wise Man with a sad expression.

"Isn't it?" The slave's face lighted up.

"I have to work all day and all night without any rest. I carry tubs of water in the morning and cook in the evening. At noon I have to go to market and at night I push the rice mill; when the sun shines I have to do the washing and when it rains I have to carry an umbrella for somebody else. In winter I stoke the furnace and in summer I have to wield a fan for my master. At midnight I have to cook snacks for him and his friends while they gamble. And they never tip me. And sometimes I am beaten with a leather whip, and. . . ."

"Oh, oh," sighed the Wise Man. His eyes became pink and tears began to roll down his cheeks.

"Sir! I cannot go on like this. I have to find some other way. But what is the other way?" cried the slave.

"I think things will soon get better," said the Wise Man softly and sympathetically.

"You think so? I have never stopped hoping. Even now, when I have unburdened myself to you and

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received your sympathy, I feel much better. After all, truth is not dead. . . ."

A few days later, however, the slave felt restless again. Again he set out to find somebody to listen to his sorrows.

"Sir!" he said, weeping, to the first man he saw. "As you no doubt know the place where I am forced to live is worse than a pigsty! My master doesn't treat me like a human being. He treats his pet dog with ten thousand times more consideration. . . ."

"How is that?" the man shouted, making the slave jump. Now that man was a Fool.

"Sir! I live in a small shabby hut, wet, dark and swarming with bugs whose bites drive me to desperation when I lie down. The stink of the place chokes me and there isn't a single window, and . . ."

"Can't you ask your master to make a window?"

"But how can I?"

"Come on. I'd like to have a look. . . ."

The Fool followed the slave to his house. Immediately he saw it he started trying to smash a hole in the earth wall.

"Sir! What are you doing?" cried the slave in horror.

"I am making a window for you."

"No. No. My master will scold me."

"Don't let that worry you," said the Fool, continuing his work.

"Good people, come! A thief is wrecking our house! Come quick before he damages it!" howled the slave, rolling on the ground in his fear.

A group of slaves ran out and drove the Fool away.

At last, slowly, out came the master, aroused by the noise.

"A thief tried to break into our house. I was the first to cry out. Then I drove him out with the others," the slave reported, respectfully and triumphantly.

"Good job," the master praised him.

That day many visitors came to commiserate with the slave, among them the Wise Man. The slave welcomed him joyfully, beaming with hope.

"Sir! I have behaved well and received praise from my master. Remember you told me that I would soon be better off. You really have foresight!"

"Naturally," said the Wise Man, seeming happy for him.

(Translated by Hong Yung-chi)

THE SHAPE OF WORLD POLITICS

Social-Democracy, the Church and revived fascist movements are props for the sagging structure of monopoly capitalism. The Western bloc.

By EUGENE VARGA

This is the second and concluding article by the distinguished Soviet economist. The first article appeared in last week's NEW MASSES *and both are abridged from issue number six (1946) of the journal "World Economy and World Politics."*

WHAT methods are at present being used in the struggle for the preservation of the capitalist system, first and foremost in Europe?

First, efforts are being made to increase reformism in the working-class movement and once more turn the Social Democratic Party and the labor movement of Germany, Hungary, Italy and France into the chief social support of the bourgeoisie.

In the European countries an intense struggle is developing between progressive and reactionary forces for control of the Social Democratic movement. This is the major content of the domestic policy of the capitalist countries. At the same time this naturally implies a struggle inside each of the Social Democratic parties, between the left and right wings, between the masses of Social Democratic workers who are much more inclined to cooperate with the Communists, and the reformist leaders of the Social Democratic parties who are trying to give Social Democracy its old pre-war forms.

This struggle is to be seen most clearly in Germany. A considerable part of the Social Democratic Party has rejected the former policy of the party and has spoken in favor of unity with the Communists. On April 21 and 22, 1946, there was a unity congress of the Social Democratic and Communist Parties of Germany at which a single working-class party was formed—the Socialist Unity Party of Germany. The vast majority of the Social Democrats in the Soviet zone of occupation favored the union of the two working-class parties. Despite the counteraction undertaken by the British and American occupation authorities the union of Social Democrats and Communists in the Soviet occupation zone met with a lively response in Western Germany.

The creation of a united working-class party in Germany is a serious blow to the reformist movement. It is, therefore, only natural that all reactionary elements should have declared war on the new party. The ruling circles of Great Britain and the United States came out immediately against the union of the Social Democrats and Communists and are giving very vigorous support to the group of reactionary Social Democratic leaders headed by Schuhmacher who are trying to revive, in the western zones of Germany, the old, reformist Social-Democracy for the defense of the capitalist system of society. It is significant that the majority of the old, compromised Social-Democratic leaders such as Severing, Noske, Paul Loebe and other tried and tested supporters of the bourgeoisie are connected with this group. The British press gives its preference to this wing of social-democracy. On April 26, 1946 the London *Economist* said: "The Social Democrats are closer to the British conception of democracy in their aims and their methods than anybody else. . . . In our opinion the first urgent decision to be made is to

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afford open support to the Social Democratic Party in the British occupation zone." (Retranslated from the Russian.)

There is no doubt that the further development of domestic policy in the capitalist countries depends to a considerable degree on the outcome of this struggle for the control of Social Democracy and the struggle within the Social Democratic parties.

CAPITALISM'S second line of defense is in increasing the influence of religion and the church. The Catholic Church, headed by the Pope, is creating something in the nature of a "Catholic international." The Vatican recently conferred the title of cardinal on thirty-two prominent Catholics in various countries in order to increase its influence in those countries. The same striving also characterizes the Protestant Church. Definite attempts have also been made to use the Moslem religion as a means of political struggle. This is to be seen most clearly in India.

In those European countries where the extreme Right reactionary parties have been forbidden the tactics of the bourgeoisie are rather unique. In these countries the bourgeoisie tries to influence elements farthest to the right in the Left parties and tries to get into its own hands the leadership of those parties and win for them a majority in the country. A classic example of this is the tactics pursued by the reactionaries during the last elections in Hungary. The Left party closest to the Right in Hungary is the Smallholders Party. After the elections it was seen that in Budapest, in districts where there is not a foot of land suitable for tilling, this party obtained the majority of the votes. The whole bourgeoisie and those who still follow the bourgeoisie voted for it.

Capitalism's third line of defense, apparent so far only in veiled forms, is the encouragement of the fascist movement. If it is true that fascism is the political expression of the deepening crisis of capitalism it is to be expected that fascism will be revived. Lenin pointed out that the rule of monopoly capitalism must inevitably engender reaction. In an article entitled a "Caricature of Marxism" he wrote: "The political superstructure for the new economy, monopoly capitalism (imperialism is monopoly capitalism) is a swing from democracy to reaction. With free competition goes democracy. With monopoly capitalism goes political reaction."

In the capitalist countries today there is undoubtedly a certain revival of political reaction and fascism. There are fascist countries like Spain and Portugal. Apart from that there are illegal fascist movements in countries where fascism formerly ruled—Germany, Italy, Hungary, etc.

There are also undoubted signs of a revival of the fascist movement in the democratic countries. Evidence of this is to be found in the activities of the fascist party in Great Britain, the Ku Klux Klan and other fascist groups in America. In Greece, where policy is actually controlled by the British, the rule of monarchist reactionaries has been established after dozens of changes of government; these reactionaries are difficult to distinguish from fascists either subjectively or objectively.

In countries with the new type of democracy the revival of fascism is, naturally, made difficult by the fact that the land reforms have done away with the landlord class, and the nationalization of the major means of production has undermined the power of the bourgeoisie. If we add to this the fact that state power in these countries is in the hands of progressive forces it becomes clear that the revival of fascism there is a matter of great difficulty.

THE domestic policy of the capitalist countries at this stage is, as always, closely intertwined with foreign policy.

Methods of struggle against the Soviet Union are naturally different from those employed after the First World War. "Intervention" in the old sense of the word is impossible. The reactionary forces in various countries, however, are conducting an intensive campaign against the Soviet Union, are attempting to isolate her and build up an anti-Soviet bloc. In his May Day Order for 1946, Stalin said: "While developing peaceful socialist construction we must not for a minute forget the intrigues of international reaction that are pregnant with plans for a new war. We must remember the admonition of the great Lenin to the effect that in going over to peaceful labor we must remain constantly on the *qui vive* and preserve the armed forces and the defense potential of our country like the apple of our eye."

In his statement made on May 27, 1946, Molotov pointed to some of the characteristic tendencies in British and American postwar policy which had come to the fore during the preparation of the peace treaties. "It has become clear," said Molotov, "that the so-

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called 'peace offensive' proclaimed in certain American circles is sometimes expressed simply as a desire to impose the will of two governments on the government of a third state."

Molotov repulsed the attempts of the reactionary forces to belittle the importance of the Soviet Union and underestimate its role in the postwar world. "In certain foreign circles," he said, "there is a desire to oust the Soviet Union from the honorable place which it by right occupies in world affairs and to undermine the world prestige of the USSR. This can be the action only of short-sighted circles and it is doomed to failure. They cannot understand that the Soviet state that bore the main burden of the struggle for the salvation of mankind from the tyranny of fascism has every title to occupy the position it does today in international affairs, a position which is in the interest of the equality of all countries, great and small, in their striving for peace and security."

The way the British reactionaries are making use of the right wing of Social Democracy in Europe for the struggle against the USSR is typical of the policy of the bourgeoisie. Naturally the Labor Party and the Labor government are the most suitable media for using this wing of Social-Democracy for the purpose of achieving the foreign political aims of the British bourgeoisie. In this respect the Labor government is more useful to the British bourgeoisie than a Conservative government would be. To this we must add the fact that whereas members of the Labor Party sometimes came out against the policy of the Conservative government and in this way formed a potential opposition, the Conservative Party has no grounds for opposing Bevin's foreign policy. The British workers, of course, do not approve this reactionary policy of Bevin and the Labor government. This disapproval finds expression in an opposition to Bevin's policy within the Labor Party parliamentary group.

THE struggle between the two systems is not the only feature of foreign policy in the capitalist countries today. Imperialist contradictions between the big capitalist countries, notably between Great Britain and the United States, are reviving despite the fact that on a number of international questions these two powers act as a common diplomatic bloc. The British-American contradictions, which were the basic contradictions of the capitalist world before the Second World War, or rather before German fascist aggression became a menace to Great Britain and the US, have since the defeat of Germany again become the most important contradictions within the capitalist world. American policy is today aimed primarily at smashing the British colonial empire and winning equal conditions for American capital in the competitive struggle throughout the whole world. This is its major aim.

The desire to put an end to the British, French and Netherlands empires takes the most varied forms. One manifestation of this during the war was the project for an Anglo-American alliance, the proposal for joint trusteeship over all colonies, etc. This tendency sometimes even assumes comical forms. A certain American publicist recently wrote a book in which he sharply criticized British, French and Netherlands colonial policy. After such criticism it was to be expected that he would propose giving the colonial peoples their independence. Instead, however, the author of the book said that the colonial peoples are not yet ripe for independence and proposed that they should themselves choose their trustees; but they were not to have the right to select that imperialist power which at present rules them—that is, British colonies, for example, could not select Great Britain. The author assumes that all would naturally choose the Americans because they are so well-intentioned toward the colonies and can ensure their prosperity.

The movement against the colonial system has become stronger. The fact that the British, French and Dutch have lost their prestige in the colonial countries plays an important role in that the colonial people no longer feel their former fear of them. The colonial peoples took part in the armed struggle side by side with the troops of some imperialist countries against other countries; they witnessed the defeat and capture of American, British and Dutch soldiers.

Economic causes are also having their effect in stimulating the anti-imperialist movement. Some of the colonies became economically much stronger during the war, some of them became independent of Great Britain financially, some of them became Great Britain's creditors. It goes without saying that opinion in the Soviet Union is in favor of granting the just demands of the colonial peoples.

The plan for a western bloc is also connected with the colonial problem:

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the idea of a western bloc, which would unite in one political alliance Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, Portugal and perhaps some of the Scandinavian countries, is directed primarily against the Soviet Union and is an attempt to reestablish the notorious *cordon sanitaire*—this time not on the frontiers of the Soviet Union, where it is now politically impossible owing to the presence of a number of friendly countries, but in western Europe.

It must also be remembered that there is another side to the western bloc. A western bloc composed of Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland and Portugal would embrace ninety-five percent of the colonies of the whole world. The establishment of the bloc would be an attempt to defend the colonies against the efforts of the United States to smash the old colonial regime and achieve an economic penetration into the colonial territories and would also be an attempt to strengthen methods of counteracting the national liberation movement in the colonies.

Naturally within the limits of this article it is only possible to outline the most important features of domestic and foreign policy in the period of the general crisis of capitalism. A fuller elaboration of this theme, especially of the political consequences of the Second World War, will require a series of special essays.

THEY'RE MARCHING UP FREEDOM ROAD

"Folks talk and they get to moving, don't they?" the sharecropper asked. The Southern Youth Legislature showed a new South astirring.

By HOWARD FAST

DRIVING up to Columbia this time, from the south, we moved slowly, taking the dirt roads that wind through the Carolina cotton country. It has seemed to me sometimes that in all America there is nothing so beautiful as this middle Carolina country in the Fall, its weather so mild and gentle, its sky bluer than anywhere else, its land all heaped in wooded hummocks, with the cotton fields between, waiting for the second picking. And the roads, the sliced hillsides are such a red as no one sees elsewhere, a soft and indescribable earth color.

The cotton crop was good this year. Even for the second picking, the bolls were heavy, but those who do such things had made carefully certain that sharecroppers and tenants would not share the fortune. The cotton steal—manipulated by the speculators—had clipped thirty-five dollars off each bale, and thereby the children of the cotton belt will run no danger of the unique experience of full bellies.

Now and then, we stopped and spoke to the sharecroppers. This is the cotton belt, the Black Belt, an agrarian land where men till the soil—and when you are away from the towns, it is a Negro country. They are an indigenous folk, these Carolina Negroes, tall and slow-spoken, gentle, born and raised and bred on toil—yet preserving a curious virtue. The only way I know to describe it is to call it a cleanliness, and even that word does not explain why, after the generations they have suffered, they still strike you as the least hopeless people in this country.

We were on our way to the Southern Youth Legislature sponsored by the Southern Negro Youth Congress, which was being held for the first time in South Carolina—not anywhere in South Carolina, not simply in a town in South Carolina, but at Columbia, the state capital, in the township hall, which seats three thousand people and is the largest auditorium in South Carolina.

And therein is more than a simple statement of fact, for Columbia is not merely a part of the South. It *is* the South. It is the nut kernel of the secession state; it sits at the core of the Black Belt, the cotton belt—and it is also at the ideological core of the whole filthy, murderous creed of racism and Jim Crow.

So when some of us heard that the Southern Youth Legislature—a representative progressive body, drawing on hundreds of organizations, but mostly Negro in composition—was to meet at Columbia, we anticipated almost anything. For Columbia has no industrial or trade union base; it has no militant progressive section; it is simply an agrarian center where anything could happen, but where—not so strangely—nothing did: that is, nothing happened in the way of provocation, in the way of violence. Yet a great deal, and more than a great deal, happened from our point of view—that of progress.

I say not so strangely, because those young leaders of Negro and white youth in the South planned and acted correctly; they massed their forces and set them on the march. A way-stop on that march, which is only beginning, was Columbia, South Carolina.

The sharecropper we spoke with some thirty miles outside of Columbia was a tall, black, handsome man, and his five-year-old daughter had a face like an angel. We asked him about Columbia, and it might have been expected that he, who could not even read nor write, might not have heard that a conference was there. But he had heard—and he asked us if we were from the North.

"Yes, from the North."

"New York?"

"New York," we agreed.

He said that there was a mighty lot of talk in New York, grinning slightly. Columbia? A lot of talk in Columbia, too, he smiled.

"What do you think?"

"Folks talk and they get to moving, don't they?" he said.

We drove into Columbia, and the town was quiet. One would not have known, from the look of the town, that history was being made there, that for the first time since Recon-

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struction in 1868, a thousand Negro and white delegates were meeting together in a youth legislature.

A LOVELY Southern town, Columbia is. It sits on a hill, and in every direction the fields and woodlands of Carolina roll away. At the highest point in town is the cupolaed state capitol, and directly in front of the state capitol is a statue of George Washington. A bronze statue, greened with time, but with that innate dignity and pride that I, at least, find in all monuments to the father of this country. But the sword is broken—the bronze sword and a part of the statue, broken and left broken these past four generations—to remind us, as a plaque under the statue tells you, of the vandalism of United States troops in the Civil War. I mention this only because it is so prominent a part of the great lie, the lie which tells us that there was good in that unholy counter-revolution which sought to destroy all we value in America, and which sapped the very life blood from the South.

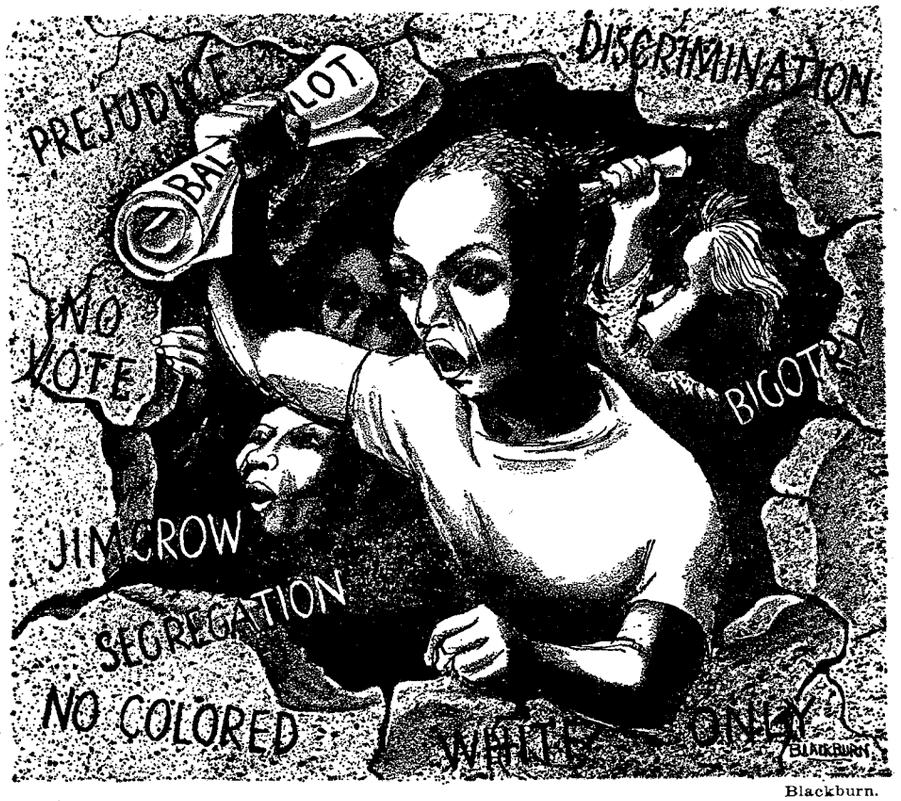
But a lie is not imperishable. Half a mile from the capitol, the Youth Legislature was even then meeting. They had asked for the township hall, and it had been granted to them. In the great chamber and in half a dozen lesser rooms, the youth of the South, black and white, more than a thousand strong, were meeting and discussing, going through the living process of argumentation, and hammering out resolution after resolution:

We, the youth, demand an end to racism!

An end to Jim Crow, to economic discrimination, to the poll-tax!

Death to the lynchers! No longer will the Negro and poor white be second-class citizens! This is a good and beautiful and fruitful land—we ask for its fruits! They are ours by the holy right of heritage and labor! We ask for peace and we ask for bread, but we ask not meekly, no longer meekly, but with a voice strong enough to be heard in every corner of the land!

The resolutions will go to the 80th Congress, as the South's voice for democracy. A few hundred miles away, in another town named Columbia, in Tennessee, there was an outbreak of violence not long ago when a mob led by state police attacked and shot up the Negro quarter—but no one attacked these thousand militant young men and women, who sat framing resolutions as some day a people's congress will frame laws for the land. Nor were they afraid.



Blackburn.

Reproduced from the call to the Southern Youth Legislature.

I watched them that Saturday night as they filed into the great hall for the public session. Already, the gallery was crowded with visitors, black folk and white folk who had come hundreds of miles to attend this session—field hand, teacher, worker, preacher, shopkeeper and others. Around the hall were hung large photographs of the twenty-two Negroes who had been elected to Congress in the Reconstruction, as if it were only fitting that they above all others should watch the truth emerging from their gallant and much-traduced struggle for freedom and equality.

The delegates marched in by states, and as each state took its place, there was a roar of applause. These were like regiments from the battle line — Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia, Texas — state after state, until representatives from all of the South were present. They had been sent by village committees, trade unions, colleges, churches, student groups. They listened to the speakers; they heard the young representatives of other lands bring personal greetings. They heard Max Yergan tell them of the struggles of colored people in Africa, and they listened to Paul Robeson sing and talk of the Soviet Union, of other lands, of the common and worldwide fellowship of man that he—and he uniquely—seems to represent. The night before, they had heard Clark Foreman, of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, and on the night to come they would hear still others, leaders of hope and progress in the South.

So that way, there in Columbia, they made their history. The tale of the South is not one of unmitigated misery and reaction. Even as every situation contains within itself its opposite, so does the South, the most reactionary part of America, contain within itself the developing seed of what may be the leading progressive force in America. And the very madness of the Bourbons, as exemplified in their current campaign of terror, is hastening this process.

Change is the order of the day, and there are no limits to change. Let no one think otherwise than that the South is changing. That is the meaning of the Southern Youth Legislature.

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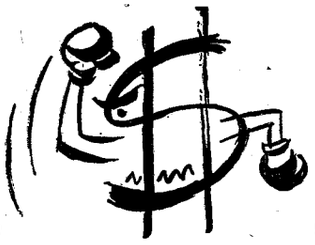

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By BILL RICHARDS

Secretary Byrnes claims that his policy is neither too "soft" nor too "tough." He would like it to appear to be a simple muddle of the road policy.

●

The present meeting place of the UN on the site of the Flushing skating rink is said to be only temporary. It is felt that the organization has been on thin ice long enough.

●

Republicans are boasting that within a few months the public will have its fill of meat. With prices skyrocketing the public will also have its fill of Republicans.

●

Governor Dewey has finally got around to criticizing the Ku Klux Klan. Sometime before Election Day he might even denounce Nazi Germany.

●

Two members of the Price Decontrol Board have refused to accept their salaries, estimated at $12,000 a year. Evidently pride means more to them than the price of a few steaks.

●

Foreign Secretary Bevin declares that British troops are trying to "put Greece on its feet again." A task complicated by having put the King on his seat again.

●

Winston Churchill sat picking his teeth all through Bevin's talk in Parliament. This is regarded as preferable to having him beat his gums.

●

Restaurants report that they are paying three times the former ceiling price for lard. Further proof that big business is living off the fat of the land.

●

Londoners are scoffing at reports that the Duke of Windsor will become Governor of Gibraltar. They point out that he couldn't even safeguard the little rocks stolen from his wife.

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review and comment

THE FACE OF MONOPOLY

How a Marxist seeks the shape of the present period in the processes of social change.

By JOHN STUART

WORLD MONOPOLY AND PEACE, *by James S. Allen. International Publishers. $2.50.*

IN MUCH of what James Allen has written there is immediately visible a discerning Marxist intelligence. His is also a challenging mind with a gift for analysis soundly founded in fact, in historic knowledge, and in devotion to working-class principles. When I say challenging mind I mean that quality of thought which abhors academic rote. This asset alone makes Allen's book one of singular importance. It cuts into the most widely held myths about the nature of American and British diplomacy, finally leaving the whole semantic shroud torn and tattered. Without reservation no other book by an American dealing with the essential problems of peace is as illuminating as this.

The book deserves special study for its methodology. It shies away from newsclip-pastepot-and-scissors research. American "scholars" in the field of current foreign affairs are notorious for rewriting their newspaper files into books. And what often passes as profound in the academic realm on scrutiny turns out to be New York *Times* dispatches (including editorial bombast) carefully scoured of cable-desk jargon, with professorial jabberwocky replacing it. There are, of course, writers less shoddy in their work; they read the treaties and documents and refer to the available primary sources. But almost uniformly their books are marred by a fatal ignorance of economics and its political compulsions.

Without knowledge of the marketplace, the dogmas of commerce, world politics remains a twistogram instead of the simply complex whole that it is. In short, the seeming puzzle of international relations cannot be probed unless the workings of monopoly capitalism, or of socialism, are first captured by the analyst, in the same way the engineer knows the tensile strength of materials and the demands of gravity before he builds his bridges.

To see how well Allen has prepared himself for his task one need only check through his reference notes. They show that his work is entrenched in the real world and not in some fable cultivated by a career executive in the State Department. In place of an alarmist headline there is the rewarding quotation or figure from a Senate committee's buried hearings. Allen's use of such reports as *Cartels and National Security*, TNEC monographs, or the *Memorandum on Regulatory Measures Affecting Foreign Trade*, is nothing short of artistic. It is artistic because the writer is scrupulously scientific in letting the lords of capitalist creation hang themselves with their own figures. When he intervenes with an opinion, Allen is merely writing an epitaph on tombstones provided by others. And these are simple examples not only of the profitable use of primary materials but of a solid design whose elements are made up of fact. It gives the work an enduring quality taking it beyond the fall and rise of the political barometer.

James S. Allen.

Yet facts, stubborn things that they are, become even more stubborn unless there is the key of theory to liberate their meaning. Here Allen excels too. He has an outlook which the facts do not challenge but reinforce. So much of American research in political economy follows the institutionalist tradition that the facts become man-consuming swamps. The work, for example, of those who prepared the remarkable TNEC documents ends in a blind alley because bourgeois theory compelled them to reach conclusions at utter variance from the movement of the data. Using the same facts Allen's theory leads him not to self-defeating conclusions in which he must repudiate what he has found but to values and understanding that advance the interests of peace and of American workers and their allies.

That theory can be quickly summarized as Marxist-Leninist. It is a clinical assay of world imperialism, the economic foundations on which it rests. Lenin was first fully to describe the contours of imperialism and to trace aggression in the modern world to the tyranny of monopoly. Allen accepts this theory by showing in practice that there is no other theory to explain imperialist politics or the nature of war or the motives of monopoly's fugelmen. Theory, however, even the most scientific, has not infrequently become a straitjacket when improperly applied. For in addition to mastering the theory's content one must understand the process of thought, the ways and means by which its substance was evolved. The process of thought is indivisible from the conclusions and both indispensable to continued understanding of the drift of the times. In Allen's book, I believe, there is a union of the two that makes it in large respect a model of American Marxist scholarship.

ALLEN meets only the essentials of postwar problems. He writes that "we must seek the shape of the present period in the processes of social

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change which have been advanced by the war, in the shift of power relations among the principal monopoly capitalist groups and nations, and in the new position of socialism, as represented in the Soviet Union, with respect to the rest of the world." The core of his study is the conclusion that the world, outside the boundaries of the USSR, has been wracked by crisis for the past twenty-five years. Neither the First nor Second World Wars have terminated this relentless storm, although the howling winds and the pelting rains may have subsided for brief periods in the inter-war years. He notes the inner tensions of the capitalist orbit—between nations and within nations — and how these tensions and conflicts bring a chain of crises with opportunities for progress and fresh dangers of war. Allen devastates the lovingly held myth that the Soviet Union generates this crisis. In fact, the makings of crisis existed before the advent of the USSR. Its birth and growth to great strength does not mitigate the crisis within capitalism because monopoly cannot solve its basic crisis at the expense of the Soviets.

In enormously rich chapters on the United States as a world power and as the stronghold of international monopoly, Allen demonstrates how America's wartime industrial expansion benefitted the monopolists and that their newly gained power is the motive force behind the policies seeking world domination. Unlike others, including even those less reverent of the system, Allen has no faith in the stability of American economy. Exaggerated rhetoric coming from the bankers or the industrialists cannot exorcise the unmistakable symptoms of boom transforming into bust. Nor are markets abroad the solution for internal economic havoc so long as the United States continues in opposition to democratic progress in Europe or the Far East. The effects of this opposition will be to restrict markets, thereby hastening internal decline.

Again with that persistent realism which is the scintillant quality of the book, Allen digs into Anglo-American relations and finds that while imperialist rivalries have been somewhat simplified by the defeat of Germany and Japan—defeats whose meaning are dealt with at considerable length—the rivalry between Washington and London moves relentlessly. It might seem that the antagonisms between the two have no real force in view of the political marriage between Byrnes and Bevin. But things are rarely what they seem offhand and if one listens to American traders and reads their anxious reports the marriage is considered by them nothing more than a matter of convenience to be annulled when expediency requires new forms, new tactics. Britain's weakening empire is America's prey.

The shift of position between these major rivals is far from complete, for while the British imperialists have lost heavily in industrial and financial strength they fight hard to prevent total subordination to the United States. The British, for example, are exceedingly cautious about multilateral trade because it opens Empire doors to American expansionists. They are also taking defensive measures ranging from an exclusively controlled western bloc to cartelization programs based primarily on regional economic arrangements.

To my mind, however, the most valuable chapters in Allen's book are devoted to an exposure of the trader freedoms. It is the first relatively thorough analysis of the American expansionist program shorn of its liberal camouflage. The American middle class has traditionally elevated to the level of priest and prophet hucksters who could mesmerize them with the phrases of "freedom" and "liberty." The ugliness of capitalist life,

Stefanelli.

the semi-starvation, the insecurity have been made tolerable by skilled manipulators who pictured these conditions as the preservation of "freedom" against "regimentation." Allen figuratively takes his reader into those mysterious chambers where all the synonyms of "free enterprise" are manufactured and shows what they actually mean when employed by America's rulers. It turns out that the anti-cartel policy mouthed by the Wall Street representatives is nothing more than an "instrument to break into established monopolies, to prevent the consolidation of cartels competing with the American trusts, and to extend the American corporate system. . . ."

There are several theoretical questions with which Allen deals successfully, albeit briefly. They range from the fallacy of "progressive" imperialism, the single world trust idea, to the differences in European nationalization programs. In all these matters Allen uses the test of production relations and political control to distinguish between the types of state capitalism and between them and socialism. His sections on socialist economy and Soviet foreign policy are excellent introductions into a whole area in which so much puerile nonsense is written. He explains why and how the USSR achieved its unique role in world affairs and the magnetizing effect of its history on colonial peoples and all people eager to make a better life for themselves.

In short, the book, less than 300 pages in length, has a diversity of subject matter but a consistency of theme that makes sense out of what ordinarily seems unfathomable. It views world affairs as ever changing. To grasp the dynamics of that change not only in world relations but within nations themselves requires first an understanding of the economies by which these countries live. Capitalist monopoly dictates one set of relations; socialism another. Monopoly is proved to be the central enemy of mankind. This is the essence of Allen's book.

THERE should perhaps have been included an additional chapter to give the work a completeness I feel it now lacks—a chapter portraying the effects of monopoly capitalism on the working class. This task is enormous, I know, but with Allen's gift for condensation and his familiarity with the material it should not have been im-

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possible. For the book as it stands deals very largely with monopoly from the angle of imperialist policy. To be sure there are sections in the book that hint, and often more than hint, at the ravages of corporate rule. But they are transient references just as the references to the development of anti-monopoly politics are not full blown even within the textual goals Allen set for himself. The chapters on the Soviet Union naturally are the keys to understanding the source of freedom from the tyranny of monopoly. The sections on new economic developments in Eastern Europe are also indicative. But more could have been done to integrate these major currents with the colonial independence movements and with international labor struggles and organization. Perhaps this suggestion can serve as the subject of another book by Allen—a natural sequel to this one.

In dealing with the devil's own science, economics, simplicity and clarity are indeed virtues. And while Allen is always simple and clear his paragraphs lack a sense of drama. The Marxist classics are models of vigorous style enriched with folk and literary allusions and a passionate conviction that bind the reader close to the writer. Allen undeniably has the talent for such writing because I remember a beautifully moving column he wrote as a farewell to his *Daily Worker* readers when he was inducted into the Army. It had a calmness that is the special quality of his writing but it also had glow and zest. A book that pounds the mind but only flicks the heart often loses much of the very large audience it deserves.

The book would have benefitted, too, if it had rejected certain assumptions. The mass of readers who should have this work because it reaches into their lives may not, and probably do not, know what a cartel is, or a monopoly, or the exact meaning of imperialism. In the public mind these words have an evil connotation yet unless they are defined precisely, condemnation of them remains more on an ethical basis rather than on a political and economic. And it would have been to advantage also to explain how they affect the wage worker's pocketbook in addition to the damage they do to peace and democracy. But let no one for a moment think that these points detract measurably from the profundity of his basic thesis or the brilliant achievement which the book is.

Adrift

ISLAND IN THE ATLANTIC, *by Waldo Frank. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $3.*

WALDO FRANK'S island turns out to be a floating one, torn loose from its moorings to solid earth. When first we discover it in mid-nineteenth century, harbored at the edge of America from the wide Atlantic's swells, it seems to be *terra firma*, a piece of the green raw world named Manhattan, where goats are still pastured in grassy gulches. But as we trace the transformation of this island through the decades, it turns from a piece of yet unexploited real estate into a man-made thing, a ship cast adrift. And in the end this ship—now become the *Cosmopolis*, the world's newest wonder—plunges with all its human freight to the bottom of the Atlantic.

Island in the Atlantic is Waldo Frank's major undertaking, a vast 500-page panorama of New York in the fifty years between the Civil War and World War I, between the Draft Riots of 1863 and the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912. Against this evolving scene Frank has placed his characters, whose lives he clearly intends as illustrations of their epoch's inevitable progress toward catastrophe. These fifty years are the span from boyhood to old age in the lives of his hero, Jonathan Hartt, son of a middle-class Jewish family whose career carries him to eminence as a lawyer, and his hero's best friend, Evan Cleeve, scion of a moneyed dynasty, who like Jonathan becomes a lawyer, but unlike him cannot put his faith in civic reform as a panacea for the evils of the age.

Seen in broad perspective, Frank's *magnum opus* (which has been six years in progress) may seem to belong in an old and honored tradition, that of the naturalistic "family chronicle" novel. Out of it one might easily piece together an outline history of New York's political, technological and cultural evolution from 1863 to 1912. What remains, however—and this is the largest part of the novel—makes it clear that Frank's approach is by no means that of the enlightened nineteenth-century liberal whose trust in scientific progress saved him from the horrors of chaos. This essential variance in viewpoint is characteristically betrayed by the unrestrained breast-beating of Frank's frequent purple passages. But the author's intentions

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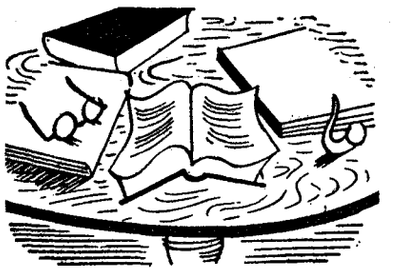

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become fully clear only with the appearance on the scene (page 398) of Dr. Freud—in the same year as Halley's comet.

It can be no accident that the good doctor—or rather, his spokesman, one Dr. Anton Freienleben — appears at something called the Radical Club in Greenwich Village, simultaneously with a representative (or mis-representative) of Dr. Marx. Dr. Freienleben tells his audience that he feels "as a man in 1500 must have felt, telling Europeans that America is discovered. In this case the America is the *unconscious* . . ." And this, we learn, lies in each of us: a "vast dark hunger that has no name, no predetermined goal, not even individual life, for it can seek its own death." Our understanding of Frank's intentions is further clarified by the pronouncements of the "revolutionary," Marius Schmitt (as grotesque a revolutionary as one is apt to find in all fiction). Schmitt's championship of Marx is far from orthodox. As he himself explains: "Marx . . . had something, when he was young and hadn't got himself organized." Nevertheless he is the only champion to step forth. It turns out, however, that despite his contempt for Dr. Freud's "old-world standards," he finds the doctor's ideas quite useable. From Schmitt we learn that "the proletarians" (those shadowy and fearful figures whom we first met, back on page 1, indulging themselves in the orgiastic violence of the Draft Riots) are no less than "society's *unconscious*. They're dark desire . . . One day they burst out. A cyclone. That's the general strike . . . The capitalist class lies on the ground, dead chickens."

It is this Freudian "vast dark hunger"—a hunger of estranged and lonely people in a hostile world for a lost sense of relationship, manifested both in individual lives and in the life of society—which is Frank's theme. But just as Frank's individuals find no solution except death (they all die, and in fact welcome death with eagerness), so his society can find no solution except—and here any reader must ask the question on which all Frank's 500 pages ultimately focus: Except what?

The answer remains uncertain.

It seems to involve violence. "No wonder men love violence," comments Frank's hero, having lost his nineteenth-century liberal's last forlorn hope of reforming social evils. "It pays. Why won't they admit it?" Before his final descent (which becomes somehow Jonathan Hartt's greatest triumph) to the bottom of the Atlantic, the possibility of salvation is hinted—but, oh, very faintly—by Father Peters, the priest who answers when asked if he is a Socialist: "I try to be one. On the true foundations of love and guilt which alone can save the sorely needed economic revolution."

It seems to me that *Island in the Atlantic*, for all its depth of insight into the realties of our world, fails in the end to meet that last test of the validity of a work of art: that it should deepen our understanding of those realities. Perhaps Frank's characters are too much the personifications of ideas. I can always feel their creator's presence, guiding them to their predetermined destinies. In the last analysis, I am uncomfortably aware that Frank is attempting, as a social theorist, to win me over to views which, as an artist, he has failed to embody convincingly in a work of art. Since I cannot accept all these views, I am not won over.

WALTER MCELROY.

Two Poets

THE GLASS MOUNTAIN AND OTHER POEMS, *by Aaron Kramer;* CIVILIAN POEMS, *by Don Gordon. Beechhurst Press.* $2.

IN THIS volume two poets build upon the same theme. The subject is that of war, the poet's reaction toward the emotional and physical upheaval of war. Mr. Kramer's poems sometimes diverge from this subject: some are expressions about love ("To Kitty"), about social or labor conditions ("After the Ballet," "Unemployed Song," "Spring Song"). All the poems deal, however, with the immediate circle of reality and concern themselves directly with social conditions.

This vast subject of war is well taken by Mr. Gordon, and his voice rings with strength and much beauty. Almost without fail he has the reader step into the scene he creates, either in his somewhat general description of the war ("Communique," "The Islands," "The Beachhead," etc.), or in his reevaluation of incidents, often very ably analyzed and pictured in detail.

With the exception perhaps of "Bomber's Moon" and "Hospital

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Room," two very fine poems, I was more moved by the brilliant imagery of individual lines than by the poems as a whole. I felt the impact of a poem was often lost because the strength of some of its lines was not sufficiently utilized.

For example:

The tents are a statement in geometry, white as pyramids in the moonlight of the year.
The mountains squat in their black silence, the tumbleweed sleeps on the great circle of sand;
The metallic herd settles in the tank park; only the sentries like slow pendulums sever the shadow and the light.

While the descriptions in each line are excellent, they follow so quickly that, in my opinion, the reader is hardly given a chance to absorb them. A poem that revolves about one strong central image can create an effect that will reach the reader with sharpness. If, conversely, one strong image is followed by another, the emotional effect of the poem tends to be flat, and the poem as an entity becomes diffused. And in many of Gordon's poems dealing with different emotions, the structure is very much the same. The result here, I feel, is sometimes to make quite different ideas and emotions appear very much alike.

Perhaps Gordon can achieve a more tightly-knit quality in his poetry by curbing the extensive use of images; he does not, by any means, need to learn how to create them. Almost without exception his poetic references are good.

The litter on the beach defined their age:
over the glass and halves of fruit
floated ironically the life perservers;

or from another poem:

Memory is divided with someone at Birth, later confused by swans and Fountains in baroque.

There is youth, strength, beauty in these lines, which clearly indicate Don Gordon's talent and his growing contribution to poetry.

Mr. Kramer is a lyric poet. However, rhythmic fluency, which he handles remarkably well, does not itself create an impression.

Then do not wonder why I press you so.
The moon would be merciless without your glow.

From another poem:

Eyes on a landscape far
slowly she enters the car,
program tenderly folded—
spellbound fingers hold it.

Peel these stanzas of their rhyme and very little is left, as the language itself is not strong enough to sustain an emotion. It is important in a poem that deals with social conditions to create fully in emotion the reality it attempts to portray, if its best quality is to be attained. "The Glass Mountain," a very long poem, in several sections, achieves a certain value if it is considered nothing more than a fairy-tale in verse. If, however, Mr. Kramer intends, as I believe he does, to draw analogies to the war and to collaborators who become conscience-stricken:

"It was I who raped" "It was I who stole"
"It was I who followed a bloody goal"

such references hardly suffice to evoke indignation toward those who with Hitler were instigators of six years of horror and war.

Credit is due Mr. Kramer for his clarity and sincere desire to achieve understanding. It is to be hoped, however, that he will strive for a continued development of the spirit and strength which are evident in some of his lines:

What ruined city roars up from our heart
to catch confetti hurled in celebration?

or

whose heart like pavement
refuses and remembers nothing.

ARTHUR GREGOR.

Lowellania

THE LOWELLS AND THEIR SEVEN WORLDS, *by Ferris Greenslet. Houghton Mifflin.* $4.

IN THE skeletonized genealogy which Mr. Greenslet has provided for *The Lowells and Their Seven Worlds*, thirty-two Lowells of at least transient importance are enumerated. Of these individuals, twelve are of enough consequence to rate entries in the *Dictionary of American Biography* and one—Abbot Lawrence Lowell—is excluded only by virtue of his too-recent death. Naturally, the history of such a family is welcome, though it is overstating it

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SCIENCE & SOCIETY
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a little to say that this chronicle "is a history of the heart, mind, imagination, animal spirits and pocketbook of New England." The Lowell's New England is an important facet of that section of America — undoubtedly the most important single facet—but its history does not make up a total history of New England society, just as a history of fishing is not a total history of New England industry.

That Mr. Greenslet should think a chronicle dealing with the Lowells could be a complete "history of the heart, mind," etc. of New England is as revelatory of the man himself as it is of his thoughts upon the Lowells. Henry Seidel Canby has called Mr. Greenslet a "scholar, gentleman, fisherman and familiar philosopher." Further, Canby has added "friendship, fishing, and quality in living, wherever and however you find it" are what Greenslet "regards as really important." These are the Lowellian criteria of living—they seem a little anachronistic in the world of the atom bomb—and if Mr. Greenslet is not a Lowell by birth, it seems obvious that training and inclination have brought him as close to that godlike status as a non-Lowell can come.

Such a man, of course, looks at the Lowells with tender and loving eyes. This outlook—tempered with an urbanity and an intelligence that always prevents *The Lowells* from becoming a mere panegyric—makes Mr. Greenslet's volume rate high in interpretative insight of the Lowells as the Lowells would see themselves; but if you're looking for any Lowell low life—the details, say, of how the Lowell pocketbook was lined—Mr. Greenslet is definitely not your man.

At any rate all the important Lowells and some of the not so important ones are here, trailing Brahmin clouds of glory through what Mr. Greenslet calls Seven Worlds. The narrative proper begins with the nonagenarian, Percival Lowle, who emigrated to the New World, at the age of sixty-eight, because of "taxes and more taxes." Settling his party of sixteen in Newbury, Massachusetts in 1639, old "Percival Lowle, Gent.," then "seems to have taken it easy, signing petitions, writing an occasional poem, and in general playing the honorable and unlaborious role of elder statesman." The others of the party toiled and spun and begot the first of the New World children destined to carry the Lowle name—changed to Lowell early in the eighteenth century—to the forefront of American family appellations.

Of all the inbreeding Lowells, the poet and scholar, James Russell, in spite of Mr. Greenslet's contention that "he never wrote a book," added most to the family glory. Certainly in his early years the most radical of the "clan," he remained, as Parrington states, a "natural tory," and only for brief spasms of time could he escape his family heritage. It was in these radical periods, however, as Parrington realizes, that his greatest poetry—the *Bigelow Papers*, series one and two—was written. Mr. Greenslet, however, states of the *Papers*, "They will stand as a historical document of the first consequence, and the affectionately humorous full-cadenced prose of Parson Wilbur, in which Lowell let himself go after the constraints of leader writing, will continue to please and entertain the sensitive ear." There speaks the Lowell mind, and, as one would expect of the Lowell mind, Mr. Greenslet reserves his chief admiration for such poems as *She Came and Went*, and the *Harvard Ode*. (This sounds deprecatory, but is meant only as an observation; the Lowell mind, generally speaking, is intelligent, perceptive, ascetic, and conservative; the drawbacks in these virtues are the limitations of the Lowells.)

Not far behind James Russell in importance come half a dozen other Lowells. The "Old Judge," progenitor of the three-pronged Higginson-Amory line, the Cabot-Jackson line, and the Russell-Spence line, in each of his three alliances married where the "money was"; in addition he has been credited with the responsibility for the "insertion of the clause which was later held by the Supreme Judicial Court to make slavery unconstitutional in the Commonwealth." John Lowell, the "Rebel," who "was not against the established order, but against those with rising power to destroy it," wrote pamphlets praising the Federalists and condemning "Mr. Madison's War." Francis Lowell founded the Waltham cotton mills, "paying dividends of ten percent or better," and did "more perhaps than any other man to swell the pocketbook of New England and shape its economic future."

In our own time three other Lowells have added lustre to the sabled Lowell escutcheon. Guy Lowell built "admirable country houses," and a number of

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public buildings, outstanding among the latter being the $20,000,000 Manhattan Court House. Amy wrote minor gems of poetry, led the Imagists in their war on "Cosmic Poetry," and created a number of legends—"a good cigar was a smoke"—about herself. And Abbot Lawrence, ah, yes, Abbot Lawrence, headed the University of Harvard (the Lowells and Harvard are almost synonymous) from 1909 to 1933, espousing the cause of academic freedom, and in one instance at least fighting nobly for that cause. Quite honestly, he, as much as any other single man, aided in the judicial murder of "a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler"—Niccola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. Quite honestly, too, he led the outcry (Mr. Greenslet doesn't think it worthy of mention) against the Supreme Court appointment of Brandeis. Quite honestly one could almost always find him on the side of reaction. He is the last of the Lowells Mr. Greenslet mentions; it's a shame he couldn't have been hidden in the middle of the volume somewhere, for the bad taste of him lingers.

JAMES LIGHT.

Rear-Echelon War

THE IRON CHAIN, *by Edward Newhouse. Harcourt Brace.* $2.50.

IF EDWARD NEWHOUSE'S heart matched his talent, *The Iron Chain* would be a considerably better book than it is. In twenty-two immaculately written short stories Mr. Newhouse, thinly disguised as a fictional rear echelon officer, pursues the war from New York to Europe to the Pacific and home again. He never quite catches it.

Of the sketches in the book, seventeen first appeared in *The New Yorker* and the other five might as well have. Each has the *New Yorker* virtues—lucid prose without cliche, and the attractive trick of making a point without stating it overtly. Each has the *New Yorker* weakness—a species of fake realism that leaves the reader feeling that such people really do exist, at least in the pages of *The New Yorker.*

Two of the stories, "The Position of the Soldier," about the hazing of a combat veteran by an upperclassman at OCS, and "Poker Game," a neat study in tension, are first rate. "Irving," about a guy from Second Avenue who accidentally crashes high society

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in the Army, starts out to be the best story in the book, but is hopelessly marred by the oblique snobbism of the author who apparently thinks we should all be kind and good to guys from Second Avenue. The other sketches show us the bored colonel in Algiers, the alcoholic Red Cross girl, the man who couldn't get away from the war and others. If there were GI's around, the author didn't seem to come across them, and so far as this reviewer could tell, the countries Mr. Newhouse visited had no native population whatsoever.

Mr. Newhouse is very good at describing the boredom and hopelessness of the officers who kept the chairs in the Pentagon Building dusted, and, to be strictly fair, his heart doesn't seem to bleed too profusely for them. But, in spite of the alleged political innocence of our fighting men, this reviewer can't recall having met many GI's who knew less about what we were fighting for than the talented Mr. Newhouse.

Even when Mr. Newhouse temporarily sheds his Olympian objectivity to question society—as in the story of the flier who reenlists because he has no place else to go—he seems to do so with the serene conviction that nothing whatever will be done about anything.

MARJORIE BARRETT.

the clearing house

DO YOU have a socially significant idea that could be fashioned into a one-act play and win $25? Well, get to it. The Philadelphia Stage For Action, 1115 Walnut Street, Philadelphia 7, Pa., is offering three prizes for the most outstanding plays submitted. Preference will be given to scripts requiring a minimum cast of ten, with a time limit of twenty to forty minutes. Contest closes November 1.

Ray Lev, pianist, will give a concert at the Carnegie Hall, New York on November 8. Her choice of program is as wide-ranged as her interests, which span from music to progressive politics.

As soon as you get this issue of NM, start asking at bookshops for a copy of the *Manual of Practical Political Action*. It will be ready for you. . . . How would you like to be an angel? Without wings of course. Your Theater, Inc., 512 Fifth Ave., New York, is offering theater-goers an opportunity to share in the profits of their Broadway productions, with each ticket-holder a stockholder in this cooperative venture.

The Cradle Will Rock is being revived under the auspices of the Equity Library Theater. Something to look forward to.

The Theodore Dreiser Cultural Workshop, 106 E. 14th Street, New York, is offering a course in puppetry. Hortense Sovetski is director of the class, which meets Wednesday at seven P.M. for twelve sessions.

Help wanted: writers, directors, administrators, producers and actors are needed by the Radio Committee of the Dreiser Workshop, to produce labor and progressive programs on recordings and radio broadcasts. Applicants will be received every Thursday night.

The People's Educational Center, Hollywood, is presenting a series of lectures on novels and novelists. Speakers will be Morton Grant, Vera Caspary, Carleton Moss, John Sanford, Guy Endore and Arnold Manoff. The lectures will cover literature from the First World War, through the Twenties and Thirties to the present, and discuss writers from Hemingway to Hersey.

In Chicago, the WBBM auditions for "Democracy, USA," gave many top-flight Negro actors their first opportunity to get a crack at radio, one of the worst Jim Crow offenders. The show, sponsored by the Chicago *Defender*, is based on the lives of outstanding Negroes. . . . The Midwest Division of People's Songs, Inc. has been set up with offices in Chicago.

Young World Books, put out by International Publishers for youngsters, is now a year old. On the agenda for this winter are three new books. *The Story of Your Coat*, by Clara Hollos, is a charming account of the making of a coat from pattern to the last buttonhole. One feature unique in children's books is the emphasis on trade unionism in the garment industry. *From Head to Foot*, by Alex Novikoff, is an introduction to physiology. Written scientifically, yet non-technically, this should answer many of the kids' questions. *Voyage Thirteen*, by Eric Lucas, is the blood-and-thunder story of the Merchant Marine and the seamen's struggle against the elements and the ship-owners.

RUTH STARR.

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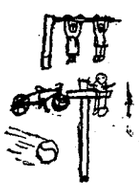

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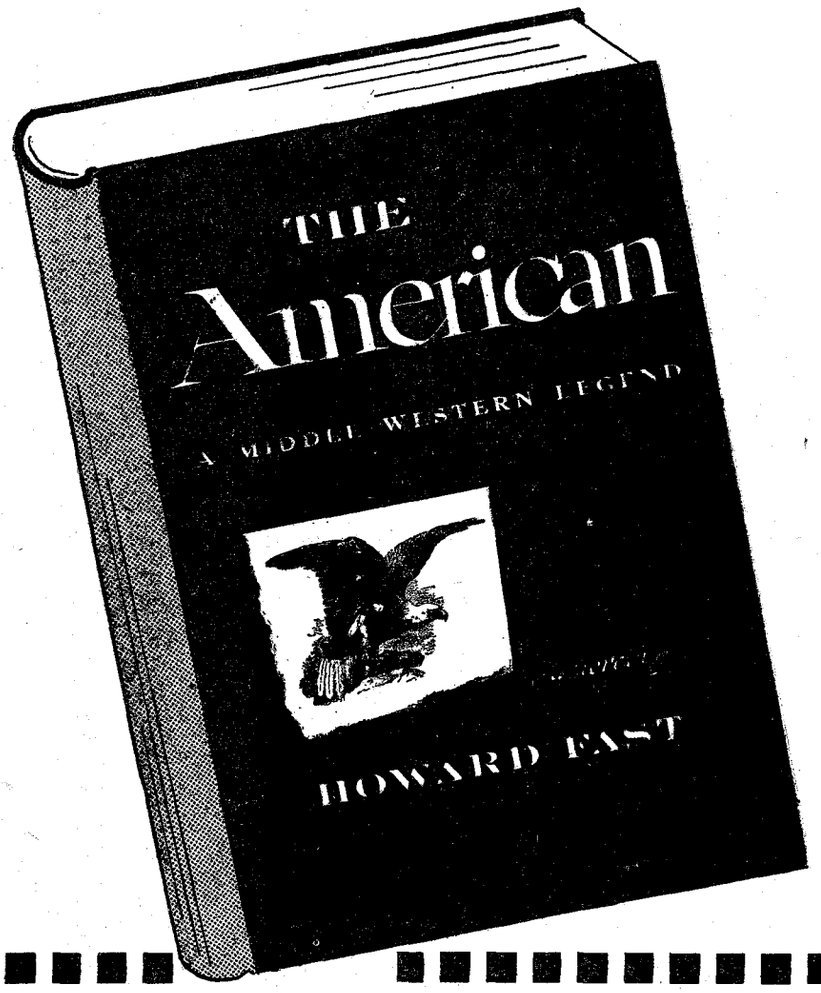

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